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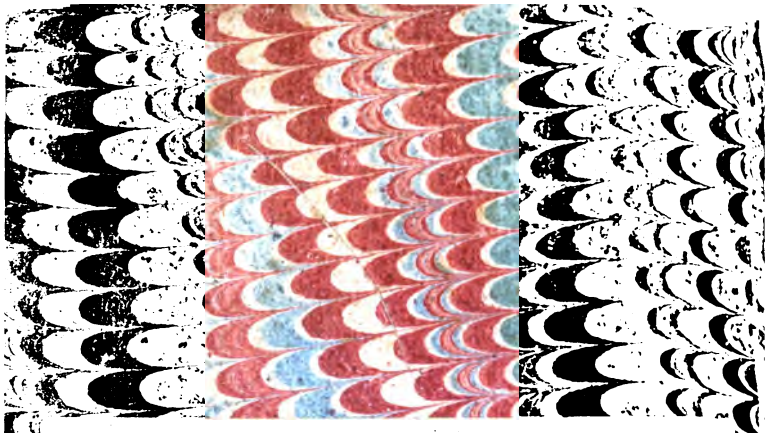

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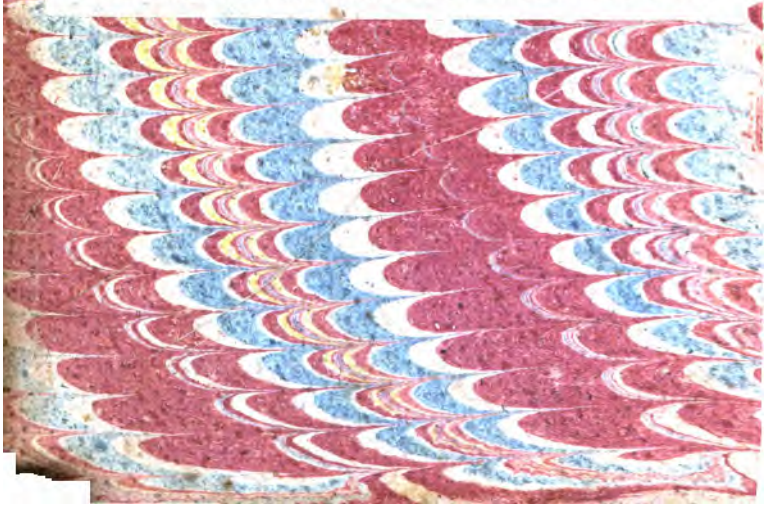

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THERON and ASPASIO:

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OR, A

SERIES

OF

DIALOGUES

AND

LETTERS,

UPON THE

Moſt *Important* and *Intereſting* SUBJECTS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY JAMES HERVEY, A.M.
Late Rector of *Weſton-Favell*, in *Northamptonſhire*.

For Zion's *ſake will I not hold my Peace, and for* Jeruſalem's *ſake I will not reſt, until the* Righteouſneſs *thereof go forth as Brightneſs, and the* Salvation *thereof as a Lamp that burneth.* Iſai. lxii. 1.

VOL. III.

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A

SERIES

OF

LETTERS.

LETTER VI.

THERON *to* ASPASIO.

Dear ASPASIO,

THE laſt Evening was one of the fineſt I ever ſaw. According to Cuſtom, I made an Excurſion into the open Fields; and wanted nothing to complete the Satisfaction, but my Friend's Company *. I could not but obſerve, how much your improving Converſation heightened the Charms of Nature. When Religion applied Philoſophy, every Thing was *inſtructive*, as well as *pleaſing*.—Not a Breeze ſwept over the Plains, to clear the Sky, and

* *Tu quod abes excepto, cætera lætus.*

cool the Air; but it tended alſo to diſperſe our Doubts, and enliven our Faith in the Supreme All-ſufficient GOOD.—Not a Cloud tinged the Firmament with radiant Colours, or amuſed the Sight with romantic Shapes, but We beheld a Picture of the preſent World. Its *fading* Acquiſitions, and *fantaſtic* Joys were pourtrayed, in the mimic Forms, and the tranſitory Scene.—Even the weakeſt of the Inſect-tribe, that ſkim the Air in ſportive Silence, addreſſed Us with the ſtrongeſt Incitements, and gave Us the loudeſt Calls, to be *active* in our Day, and *uſeful* in our Generation. They cried, at leaſt when You lent them your Tongue,

Such is vain Life, an idle Flight of Days,
A ſtill deluſive Round of ſickly Joys,
A Scene of little Cares, and trifling Paſſions,
If not ennobled by the Deeds of Virtue.

How often, at the Approach of ſober Eve, have We ſauntered through the duſky Glade. Obſerving the laſt Remains of Light, now impurpling the Weſtern Clouds; now faintly gleaming on the Mountain's Brow; now creeping inſenſibly from all the ſhaded Landſcape.—How often have We ſtole along the Cloyſters of ſome leafy Bower; attentive to the Tale of a *querulous* Current. That ſeemed to be ſtruck with Horror, at the awful Gloom; and complained with heavier Murmurs, as it paſſed under the blackening Shades, and along the Root-obſtructed Channel.—Or elſe, far from the babbling Brook, and ſoftly treading the graſſy Path, We liſtened to the *Nightingale*'s Song. While every Gale held its Breath, and all the Leaves forbore their Motion,

Motion, that they might neither drown nor interrupt the melodious Woe.—From both which penſive Strains, You endeavoured to temper and chaſtiſe the exuberant Gaiety of my Spirits. You convinced me, that *true* Joy is a ſerious Thing *: is the Child of ſedate Thought, not the Spawn of intemperate Mirth: nurſed, not by the Sallies of diſſolute Merriment, but by the Exerciſe of ſerene Contemplation.

Sometimes, at the gladſome Return of Morn, we have aſcended an airy Eminence; and hailed the new-born Day; and gazed the Dew-bright Earth; and followed, with our delighted Eye, the Mazes of ſome glittering Stream.—Here *ruſhing*, with impetuous Fury, over the Mountain's Summit; tumbling from Rock to Rock; and roaring down the craggy Steep. Impatient, as it were, to get free from ſuch rugged Paths, and mingle itſelf with the adjacent Mead.—There, ſlackening its headlong Career, and ſmoothing its Eddies, into a glaſſy Surface, and a gentle Flow. While, deep embоſomed in the verdant Soil, it *winds* through the cheriſhed and ſmiling Herbage. Sometimes, loſt amidſt cloſing Willows; ſometimes, iſſuing with freſh Luſtre from the verdant Arch; always, roving with an Air of amorous Complacency, as though it would kiſs the fringed Banks, and careſs the flowery Glebe.—Reminded, by this watery Monitor, of that Conſtancy and Vigour, with which the Affections ſhould move towards the great *Center* of Happineſs, *CHRIST JESUS*—of that determined Ardour, with which we ſhould break through the Entanglements of Temptation, and Obſtacles of

* *Res ſevera eſt verum Gaudium.* SEN.

the World, in order to reach our everlaſting *Reſt*—and of the mighty Difference between the turbulent, the frothy, the precipitate Gratifications of Vice, and the calm, the ſubſtantial, the permanent Delights of *Religion*.

Or elſe, with careleſs Step, We have rambled along the Fields. Sometimes, prying into the ſecret Shade, or hiding Ourſelves in the ſequeſtred Vale. Sometimes, We have roved again on the upland Plains; with eager Views ſurveying the univerſal Proſpect; and even devouring the Beauties of Nature, or, as the Scripture ſpeaks, *taking them with our Eyes* *. Never weary of admiring the Magnificence and Glory of the Creation. An endleſs Variety of graceful Objects, and delightful Scenes! Each ſoliciting our chief Regard; every one worthy of our whole Attention; all conſpiring to touch the Heart with a mingled Tranſport of Wonder, of Gratitude, and of Joy.—So that we have returned from our rural Expedition, not as the *Spendthrift* from the Gaming-table, curſing his Stars, and raving at his ill Luck; gulled of his Money, and the derided Dupe of Sharpers. Not as the *Libertine* from the Houſe of Wantonneſs †, ſurfeited

* Job xl. 24.

† *Solomon*, in order to deter unwary Youth from thoſe Sinks of Uncleanneſs, repreſents the Harlot under the Character of a peſtilent Hag, or baleful Sorcereſs. *Her Feet go down to Death*; Prov. v. 5. *Her Houſe is* the high Road *to Hell*; Prov. vii. 27. yea, *her Gueſts are in the Depths of Hell*; Prov. ix. 18.—The ſecond Clauſe ſeems to be emphatical. The original Expreſſion is in the plural Number דרכי. I chooſe therefore to render it, not ſimply *The Road*, but more largely *The high Road*: from which many other Ways of Guilt branch out, in which many other Paths of Ruin coincide. There, Murder is often

feited with the rank Debauch, dogged by Shame, goaded by Remorſe, with a thouſand recent Poiſons tingling in his Veins. But we returned, as Ships of Commerce from the *golden* Continent, or the *ſpicy* Iſlands, with new Acceſſions of ſublime Improvement, and ſolid Pleaſure. With a deeper Veneration for the Almighty CREATOR; with a warmer Senſe of his unſpeakable Favours; and with a more inflamed Deſire, "to know him now by "Faith, and after this Life to have the Fruition "of his glorious GODHEAD."

Sometimes, with an agreeable Relaxation, we have transferred our Cares, from the Welfare of the Nation, to the Flouriſhing of the Farm; and, inſtead of enacting Regulations for the civil Community, we have planned Schemes for the Cultivation of our Ground, and the Proſperity of our Cattle.—Inſtead of attending to the Courſe of Fleets, and the Deſtination of Armies, We have directed the Plough, where to rend the graſſy Turf; or taught the Honeyſuckle to wind round the Arbour, and the Jeſſamine to climb upon the Wall.—Inſtead of interpoſing our friendly Offices, to reconcile contending Kingdoms; We have formed a *Treaty* of *Coalition*, between the

 ſtranger

often known, to drench her Dagger in Blood; and Robbery forms the raſh Reſolve, which ends in the ignominious Halter. There, Intemperance daily brews the Bowl, which enervates the Conſtitution, and transforms the Man into a Beaſt. While Diſeaſe, pale cadaverous noiſome Diſeaſe, anticipates the Putrefaction of the Grave, and cauſes the wretched *Martyrs* of *Vice* to rot even above Ground.—Well may every one, who loves Life, and would fain ſee good Days, cry out with a Mixture of Deteſtation and Dread; "O my Soul, come not thou "into their horrid Haunts!"

Dii meliora Piis, Erroremque Hoſtibus illum! VIRG.

ſtranger Cyon, and the adopting Tree; and, by the remarkable Melioration of the enſuing Fruit, demonſtrated (would contending Empires regard the Precedent) what Advantages flow from pacific Meaſures, and an amicable Union.—Inſtead of unraveling the Labyrinths of State, and tracing the Fineſſes of foreign Courts; We have made ourſelves acquainted with the *Politics* of Nature, and obſerved, how wonderfully, how myſteriouſly, that great Projectreſs acts.—In this Place ſhe rears a vaſt Trunk, and unfolds a Multiplicity of Branches, from one ſmall Berry. She qualifies, by her amazing Operations, a few contemptible Acorns, that were formerly carried in a Child's Lap, to bear the *Britiſh* Thunder round the Globe, and ſecure to our Iſland the Sovereignty of the Ocean.—In another Place, ſhe produces from a dry Grain, *firſt the* green *Blade*; *then the* turgid *Ear*; *afterwards the* full-grown and ripened *Corn in the Ear* *. Repaying, with exact Punctuality, and with laviſh Uſury, the Huſbandman's Toil, and the Huſbandman's Loan: cauſing, by a moſt ſurpriſing Reſurrection, the Death of one Seed, to be fruitful in the Birth of Hundreds.

But I forget your Caution, *Aſpaſio*; forget, how kindly you have checked me, when I have been haranguing upon, I know not what, Powers and Works of Nature. Whereas, it is GOD who *worketh hitherto* †: who to this Day exerts, and to the End of Time will exert, that ſecret but unremitted Energy, which is the Life of this majeſtic Syſtem, and the Cauſe of all its ſtupendous Operations. —Let this ſhew you, how much I want my Guide, my Philoſopher, and Friend. Without his prompting

* Mark iv. 28. † John v. 17.

ing Aid, my Genius is dull; my Reflections are aukward; and my religious Improvements jejune; ſomewhat like the *bungling* Imitations of the Tool, compared with the *maſterly* Effects of Vegetation.—However, I will proceed. Yet, not from any View of informing my *Aſpaſio*, but only to draw a Bill upon his Pen; and lay him under an Obligation to enrich me with another Letter, upon the grand and excellent Subject of his laſt.

Art is dim-ſighted in her Plans, and defective even in her moſt elaborate Eſſays. But *Nature*, or rather Nature's ſublime AUTHOR, is indeed a Deſigner and *a Workman* * *that need not be aſhamed* †. His Eye ſtrikes out ten thouſand elegant Models, and his Touch executes all with inimitable Perfection.—What an admirable Specimen is Here, of the divine Skill, and of the divine Goodneſs! This terraqueous Globe is intended, not only for a Place of Habitation, but for a Storehouſe of Conveniencies. If We examine the ſeveral Apartments of our great Abode; if We take a general *Inventory* of our common Goods; We ſhall find Reaſon to be charmed with the Diſplays, both of nice Oeconomy, and of boundleſs Profuſion.

Obſerve the *Surface* of this univerſal Meſſuage. The Ground, coarſe as it may ſeem, and trodden by every Foot, is nevertheleſs the *Laboratory*, where the moſt exquiſite Operations are performed; the *Shop*, if I may ſo ſpeak, where the fineſt Manufactures

* *A Deſigner and a Workman*; this ſeems to be the preciſe Meaning of the Apoſtle's Words, Τεχνίτης καὶ δημιουργός. Heb. xi. 10. *Builder and Maker*, are too ſimilar. *Projector and Architect*, would be more diſtinct.

† 2 Tim. ii. 15.

tures are wrought. Though all Generations have, each in their Order, been accommodated by its Productions; though all Nations under Heaven are, to this very Day, ſupplied by its Liberalities, it ſtill continues inexhauſted. Is a Reſource, always new; a Magazine, never to be drained.

As this is a Property very remarkable, and unſpeakably valuable, it deſerves our more particular Regard. Was it reverſed, what would become of the World, both rational, animal, and vegetable? —In commercial Affairs, *Uſury* is looked upon as the Canker of an Eſtate. A corroding Worm, which eats into the Heart, and conſumes the very Vitals, of our Subſtance. The Earth borrows immenſe Sums yearly. Theſe She repays with an Intereſt prodigiouſly large, almoſt incredible. Yet is She never impoveriſhed. Or if impoveriſhed in ſome Degree, the Repoſe of a ſingle Year, with a little Cultivation from the Owner, is ſufficient for the Reparation of all her Loſſes.—Old Age weakens the moſt vigorous Animals. Even the hardieſt Oaks are impaired by Time. A State of Barrenneſs and Decay awaits them all; and admits neither of Prevention, nor of Remedy. But the Earth, which is the Mother and the Nurſe of Us all, is ſubject to none of theſe Infirmities. She is now almoſt ſix thouſand Years old, yet diſcovers no Sign of a *broken* Conſtitution, nor any one Symptom of *exhauſted* Strength. In Spring, She blooms like a Virgin; in Summer, ſhe ſparkles like a Bride; in Autumn, ſhe teems like a Matron. If grey Hairs ſeem to be upon Her, during the wintry Months; She is ſure to drop them, when the Froſts are gone, and the Sun approaches. She never fails, at that Seaſon,

Season, to re-assume all the Graces, and to re-exert all the Vigour of Youth.—Though She has been pregnant with thousands and thousands of Vintages and Harvests; though She has suckled unnumbered Millions of green and flowery Families; her Womb is as strong and lively to conceive *, her Breasts are as copious and milky to nourish, as if She was but just delivered of her First-born.—To what is this unequaled and never-ceasing Fertility owing? What, but that mighty Word, proceeding from the Mouth of JEHOVAH; *While the Earth remaineth, Seed-time and Harvest shall not cease* †. How short the Decree, but how long and lasting its Efficacy! It has reached to this Hour; it will reach to distant Ages; it will extend itself to the very End of Time.

The *Unevenness* of the Ground, far from being a Blemish or a Defect; heightens its Beauty, and augments its Usefulness.—*Here*, it is scooped into deep and sheltered Vales, almost constantly covered with a spontaneous Growth of Verdure: which, all tender and succulent, composes an easy Couch, and yields the most agreeable Fodder, for the various Tribes of Cattle.—*There*, it is extended into a wide, open, champain Country: which, annually replenished with the Husbandman's Seed, shoots into a copious Harvest. A Harvest, not only of that *principal Wheat*, which strengthens our Heart, and is the

* St. *Chrysostom* thought this a wonderful Circumstance, and has touched it in one of his most celebrated Orations. Εννοησον μοι το καλλος του ουρανου, ποσον εχει χρονον, και ουκ ημαυρωθη, αλλ' ωσπερ Σημερον κατασκευασθεις, ουτως εστιν αποστιλβων· της γης την δυναμιν, πως ουκ ηλονησεν αυτης η γαστηρ τοσουτον τικτουσα χρονον. Ανδριαντ. ι.

† Gen. viii. 22.

the Staff of our Life; but of the *appointed Barley* * alſo, and of various other Sorts of Grain. Which yield an excellent Food for our Animals; and either enable them to diſpatch our Drudgery, or elſe fatten their Fleſh for our Tables.

The Furrows, obedient to the Will of Man, vary their Produce †. They bring forth a Crop of tall, flexile, ſlender Plants ‡: whoſe thin filmy Coat, dried, attenuated, and ſkilfully manufactured, transforms itſelf into ſome of the moſt neceſſary *Accommodations* of Life, and genteeleſt *Embelliſhments* of Society.—It is wove into ample Volumes of Cloth; which, fixed to the Maſt, give Wings to our Ships, and waft them to the Extremities of the Ocean.—It is twiſted into vaſt Lengths of Cordage; which add Nerves to the Crane, and lend Sinews to the Pulley; or elſe, adhering to the Anchor, they faſten the Veſſel even on the fluctuating Element, and ſecure its Station even amidſt driving Tempeſts.—It furniſhes the Ducheſs with her coſtly Head-dreſs, and delicately fine Ruffles. No leſs ſtrong than neat, it ſupplies the Plowman with his coarſe Frock, and the Sailor with his clumſy Trowſers. Its Fibres,

* *Iſai.* xxviii. 25. *Theron* adopts our received Tranſlation. Which ſeems, like the Trumpet giving an uncertain Sound, to perplex, rather than inform. We know not, what to underſtand by the Word *appointed*, when uſed in this Connection. Whereas, the true Interpretation of the Original, is, I think, as follows; ושערה נסמן וכסמת גבולתו *Et Hordeo ſignata eſt & Quæ Meta ſua. A Proper Place is aſſigned both for the Barley and the Rye.*

† One may venture to ſay of the Earth, with regard to its vegetable Operation;

Omnia transformat ſeſe in Miracula Rerum.

‡ Flax and Hemp.

bres, artfully ranged by the Operations of the Loom, cover our Tables with a graceful Elegance, and ſurround our Bodies with a cheriſhing Warmth. On this the Painter ſpreads the Colours, which enchant the Eye; in this the Merchant packs the Wares, which enrich the World.

Yonder, the *Hills*, like a grand Amphitheatre, ariſe. Amphitheatre! All the pompous Works of *Roman* Magnificence, are leſs than Mole-banks, are mere Cockle-ſhells, compared with thoſe majeſtic Elevations of the Earth. Some clad with mantling Vines; ſome crowned with towering Cedars; ſome ragged with miſhapen Rocks, or yawning with ſubterraneous Dens. Whoſe rough and inacceſſible Craggs, whoſe hideous and gloomy Cavities, are not only a continual Refuge for the wild Goats, but have often proved an Aſylum to perſecuted Merit *, and a Safeguard to the moſt valuable Lives.

At a greater Diſtance, the *Mountains* lift their frozen Brows, or penetrate the Clouds with their aſpiring Peaks. Their frozen Brows *arreſt* the roving, and *condenſe* the rarefied Vapours †. Their ſtony Bowels, formed into Caverns, collect the dripping Treaſures, and ſend them abroad, in gradual Communications, by trickling Springs. While their ſteep Sides *precipitate* the watery Stores; rolling them on with ſuch a forcible Impulſe ‡, that they

* To *David*, from *Saul*'s Malice; to *Elijah*, from *Jezebel*'s Vengeance; to many of the primitive *Chriſtians*, from the Rage of perſecuting Emperors: *they wandered in Deſarts and in Mountains, in Dens and Caves of the Earth.* Heb. xi. 38.

† Therefore ſtyled—*Nimboſa Cacumina Montis.* VIRG.

‡ It is obſervable, that the largeſt Rivers in the World, thoſe which roll the heavieſt Burden of Waters, and perform

they never intermit their unwearied Courſe, till they have ſwept through the moſt extenſive Climes, and regained their native Seas.

The *Vineyard* ſwells into a Profuſion of Cluſters: ſome tinged with the deepeſt Purple, and delicately clouded with Azure: ſome, clad with a whitiſh tranſparent Skin, which ſhews the tempting Kernels, lodged in luſcious Nectar.—The Vine requires a ſtrong Reflection of the Sun-beams, and a very large Proportion of Warmth. How commodiouſly do the Hills and Mountains miniſter to this Purpoſe! May We not call thoſe vaſt Declivities, the *Garden-walls* of Nature? Which, far more effectually than the moſt coſtly Glaſſes, or moſt artful Green-houſes, concenter the ſolar Heat, and complete the Maturity of the Grape. Diſtending it with a Liquor of the fineſt Scent, the moſt agreeable Reliſh, and the moſt exalted Qualities: ſuch as diſſipate Sadneſs, and inſpire Vivacity: ſuch as make

form the moſt extenſive Circuit through the Nations, generally take their Riſe from Mountains. The *Rhine*, the *Rhone*, and the *Po*, all deſcend from the *Alps*. The *Tygris* derives its rapid Flood, from the everlaſting Snows, and ſteep Ridges of *Niphates*. And, to mention but one more Inſtance, the River *Amazones*, which pours itſelf through a Multitude of Provinces, and waters near eighteen hundred Leagues of Land, has its Urn in the Caverns, and its Impetus from the Precipices, of that immenſe Range of Hills, the *Andes*.

If the Reader is inclined to ſee the Origin and Formation of Rivers deſcribed, in all the Sublimity of Diction, and with all the Graces of Poetry, He may find this Entertainment in Mr. *Thomſon*'s Autumn, *Lin.* 781. laſt Edit.

Amazing Scene! behold, the Glooms diſcloſe.
I ſee the Rivers in their infant Beds!
Deep, deep I hear them, lab'ring to get free! &c.

make glad the Heart of Man, and moſt ſweetly prompt, both his Gratitude and his Duty, to the Munificent GIVER.—I grieve, and I bluſh for my Fellow-creatures, that Any ſhould *abuſe* this Indulgence of Heaven. That Any ſhould turn ſo valuable a Gift of GOD into a deteſtable Inſtrument of Sin! Should turn the moſt exhilarating of Cordials into Poiſon, Madneſs, and Death.

The *Kitchen-garden* preſents Us with a new Train of Benefits. In its blooming Ornaments, what unaffected Beauty! In its culinary Productions, what diverſified Riches! It ripens a Multitude of nutrimental Eſculents, and almoſt an equal Abundance of medicinal Herbs; diſtributing Refreſhments to the Healthy, and adminiſtering Remedies to the Sick.—The *Orchard*, all fair, and ruddy, and bowing down beneath its own delicious Burden, gives Us a freſh Demonſtration of our CREATOR's Kindneſs. Regales Us, firſt, with all the Delicacies of Summer Fruits; next, with the more laſting Succeſſion of Autumnal Dainties.

What is Nature, but a Series of Wonders, and a Fund of Delights! That ſuch a Variety of Fruits, ſo beautifully coloured, and ſo elegantly ſhaped; ſo charmingly flavoured, and enriched with ſuch admirable Juices; ſhould ariſe from the Earth! Than which nothing is more inſipid, ſordid, and deſpicable.—I am ſtruck with pleaſing Aſtoniſhment, at the *Cauſe* of theſe fine Effects! I am no leſs ſurpriſed, at the *Manner* of bringing them into Exiſtence. I take a Walk in my Garden, or a Turn through my Orchard, in the Month of *December*. There ſtand ſeveral Logs of Wood. Some, of ſtately Height, and diffuſive Spread. Others, con-

tracted into Dwarfs, or disposed along the Espalier. All, naked and un-ornamented; all, fastened to the Ground, and neither endued with Sense, nor capable of Motion. No human Hand will touch them; no human Aid will succour them. Yet, in a little Time, they are beautified with Blossoms; after which, they are covered with Leaves; and, at last, they are loaded with mellow Treasures. With the downy Peach and the polished Plum; with the musky Apricot, and the juicy Pear; with the Cherry, and its coral Pendants, glowing through Lattices of Green,

——————————— *and dark*
Beneath her ample Leaf, the luscious Fig.

I have wondered at the Structure of my Watch; wondered more at the Description of the Silk-mills; most of all, at the Account of those prodigious Engines, invented by *Archimedes*. But what are all the Inventions of all the Geometricians and Mechanics in the World, compared with these inconceivably nice *Automata* * of Nature! These *self-operating Machines*

* *Automata*, or *self-operating* Machines; not meant to set aside the Superintendency of Providence, but only to exclude the Co-operation of Man.

The Word αυτοματη is used by our MASTER; is a very fine, and most expressive Word; for which Reasons, I have ventured to give it a Kind of *English* Naturalization. It signifies, says a *Greek* Scholiast, τας μηχανας, αι κατ' αυτας ενεργουσαι. See *Mark* iv. 28.—It is an Explication of that remarkable Phrase, which occurs in the *Mosaic* History of the Creation, אשר ברא אלהים לעשות Gen. ii. 3. *Which GOD created and made*, appears tautological, and is by no means an exact Translation. It should rather be interpreted, *Which GOD created in order to make*;

chines dispatch their Business, with a Punctuality that never mistakes, with a Dexterity that cannot be equalled. In Spring, they clothe themselves with such unstudied but exquisite Finery, as far exceeds the Embroidery of the Needle, or the Labours of the Loom. In Autumn, they present Us with such a Collation of Sweetmeats, and such Blandishments of Taste, as surpass whatever the most critical Luxury could prepare, or the most lavish Fancy imagine.—So that those *coarse* and *senseless* Logs, first decorate the divine Creation, then perform the Honours of the Table.

If, amidst these ordinary Productions of the Earth, GOD appears so *great in Counsel, and so mighty in Work* *: what may We expect to see, amidst the Palaces of Heaven; among the Hierarchies of Angels; and in that wonderful REDEEMER, who is, beyond all other Objects, beyond all other Manifestations, *the Wisdom of GOD, and the Power of GOD* †.

The *Forest* rears Myriads of massy Bodies. Which, though neither gay with Blossoms, nor rich with Fruits, supply Us with Ornaments, far more durable than the former; with Benefits, far more valuable than the latter. They supply Us with Timber of various Kinds, and of every desirable Quality ‡.—But who shall cultivate such huge Trees, diffused

make; to make, by these prolific Instruments and propagating Principles, a continual Succession of Animals, Vegetables, and Creatures.

* Jer. xxxii. 19. † 1 Cor. i. 24.

‡ *Tully* has given Us an Abridgment of all the preceding Particulars. Which, I think, is one of the finest Landscapes in Miniature, that the descriptive Pen ever drew.

diffuſed over ſo vaſt a Space? The Toil were endleſs; the Taſk impoſſible. See therefore the all-wiſe and ever-gracious Ordination of Providence! They are ſo conſtituted, that they have no Need of the Spade, the Pruning-knife, or the Watering-pot. Nay, the little Services of Man would diminiſh, rather than augment their Dignity and their Uſefulneſs. The more they are neglected, the better they thrive; ſcorning, as it were, to be dependent on any Hand, but the divine; and ſpeaking, by their own native Grandeur, the tranſcendent Greatneſs of their PLANTER *.

When felled by the Axe, they are ſawed into Beams, and ſuſtain the Roofs of our Houſes. They are faſhioned into Carriages, and ſerve for the Conveyance of the heavieſt Loads.—Their Subſtance ſo *pliant*, that they yield to the Chizzel of the Turner, and are ſmoothed by the Plane of the Joiner; are wrought into the niceſt Diminutions of Shape, and compoſe ſome of the fineſt Branches of houſhold Furniture.—Their Texture ſo *ſolid*, that they form the moſt important Parts of thoſe mighty Engines; which, adapting themſelves to the Play of mechanic Powers, diſpatch more Work in a ſingle Hour, than could otherwiſe be accompliſhed in many Days.—At the ſame Time, their Preſſure is ſo *light*, that

drew.—*Terra univerſa cernatur, veſtita Floribus, Herbis, Arboribus, Frugibus; quorum omnium incredibilis Multitudo inſatiabili Varietate diſtinguitur. Adde huc Fontium gelidas Perennitates, Liquores perlucidos Amnium, Riparum Veſtitus viridiſſimos, Speluncarum concavas Altitudines, Saxorum Aſperitates, impendentium Montium Altitudines, Immenſitateſque Camporum.* De Nat. Deor. Lib. II.

* *Chryſoſtom*, making Mention of Trees, ſays; Τα μεν γαρ δια τε καρπε, τα δε δια τε μεγεθες, τα δε δια τε καλλες, ανεπαμπει τω ποιησαντι την ωφελειαν.

that they float upon the Waters; and glide along the Surface, almoſt with as much Agility, as the finny Fry glance through the Deep.—Thus, while they impart Magnificence to Architecture, and beſtow numberleſs Conveniencies on the Family; they conſtitute the very Baſis of Navigation, and give Life to our domeſtic Trade, give Being to the Commerce of Nations.

Amidſt the inacceſſible Receſſes of the Foreſt, an Habitation is aſſigned to thoſe *ravenous* Beaſts, whoſe Appearance would be frightful, and their Neighbourhood dangerous. There, the ſternly majeſtic Lion rouſes Himſelf from his Den; ſtalks through the midnight Shades; and awes the ſavage Herds with his Roar. There, the fiery Tyger ſprings upon his Prey, and the gloomy Bear trains up her Whelps. There, the ſwift Leopard ranges, the grim Wolf prowls, and both in queſt of Murder and Blood. —Were theſe horrid Animals to dwell in our Fields, what *Havock* would they make? What *Conſternation* would they ſpread? To prevent ſuch miſchievous Conſequences, the almighty RULER ſaith; *I have made the Wilderneſs their Houſe, and the barren Land their Dwelling* *. In Obedience to this Decree, they baniſh themſelves from the Seat of Society, and from the Scenes of Fertility. They even bury themſelves, in the deepeſt Solitudes of the Deſart. While the Ox, the Horſe, and the ſerviceable Quadrupeds, live under our Inſpection, and keep within our Call: profiting Us as much by their Preſence, as the others oblige Us by their Abſence.

* Job xxxix. 6.

If, at any Time, thoſe ſhaggy Monſters make an Excurſion into the habitable World, it is when Man retires to his Chamber, and ſleeps in Security. The Sun, which invites other Creatures abroad, gives them a Signal and a Command to retreat. *The Sun ariſeth, and they get them away, and lay them down in their Dens* *. Strange! That the orient Light, which is ſo pleaſing to Us, ſhould ſtrike ſuch Terror on them! Should, more effectually than a Legion of Guards, put them all to flight, and clear the Country of thoſe formidable Enemies!

If We turn our Thoughts to the *Atmoſphere*, We find a moſt curious and exquiſite Apparatus of *Air*. Which, becauſe no Object of our Sight, is ſeldom obſerved, and little regarded; yet is a Source of innumerable Advantages. And all theſe Advantages are fetched (which is almoſt incredible) from the very Jaws of Ruin. My Meaning may be obſcure, therefore I explain myſelf.

We live plunged, if I may ſo ſpeak, in an Ocean of Air. Whoſe *Preſſure*, upon a Perſon of moderate Size, is equal to the Weight of *twenty thouſand* Pounds. Tremendous Conſideration! Should the Cieling of a Room, or the Roof of a Houſe, fall upon Us with half that Force, what deſtructive Effects muſt enſue. Such a Force would infallibly drive the Breath from our Lungs, or break every Bone in our Bodies. Yet, ſo admirably has the Divine Wiſdom contrived this aerial Fluid, and ſo nicely counterpoiſed its dreadful Power, that We receive not the ſlighteſt Hurt; We ſuffer no manner of Inconvenience; We even *enjoy* the Load.

Inſtead

* Pſal. civ. 22.

Inſtead of being as a Mountain on our Loins, it is like Wings to our Feet, or like Sinews to our Limbs. —Is not this *common* Ordination of Providence, thus conſidered, ſomewhat like the Miracle of the burning Buſh; whoſe tender and combuſtible Subſtance, though in the Midſt of Flames, was neither conſumed nor injured *? Is it not almoſt as marvelous, as the Prodigy of the three *Hebrew* Youths? Who walked in the fiery Furnace, without having a Hair of their Heads ſinged, or ſo much as the Smell of Fire paſſing on their Garments †?—Surely, We have Reaſon to ſay unto GOD; *O! how terrible*, yet how beneficent, *art Thou in thy Works!*

The Air, though too weak to ſupport *our* Flight, is a Thoroughfare for innumerable Wings. Here the whole Commonwealth of *Birds* take up their Abode. Here they lodge and expatiate, beyond the Reach of their Adverſaries. Were they to run upon the Earth, they would be expoſed to ten thouſand Dangers, without proper Strength to reſiſt them, or ſufficient Speed to eſcape them. Whereas, by mounting the Skies, and *lifting themſelves up on high*, they are ſecure from Peril, *they ſcorn the Horſe and his Rider* ‡.—Some of them perching upon the Boughs, others ſoaring amidſt the Firmament, entertain Us with their *Notes*. Which are muſical and agreeable ‖, when heard at this convenient Diſtance;

* Exod. iii. 2. † Dan. iii. 27. ‡ Job xxxix. 18.

‖ *Muſical and agreeable*—Of this Kind are almoſt all their Notes; formed to charm the Ear, and inſpire Delight. If indeed the Turtle is melancholy, and the Raven ſolemn, they are only like the Baſe in a Concert; or as Diſcords judiciouſly intermingled, in a fine Piece of Muſic.

Diſtance; but would be noiſy and importunate, if brought near to our Ears.—Here, many of thoſe feathered Families reſide, which yield Us a delicious *Treat*; yet give Us no Trouble, put Us to no Expence, and, till the Moment We want them, are wholly out of our Way.

The Air, commiſſioned by its All-bountiful AUTHOR, charges itſelf with the Adminiſtration of ſeveral Offices, which are perfectly obliging, and no leſs ſerviceable to Mankind.—Co-operating with our Lungs, it *ventilates* the Blood, and refines our Fluids. It qualifies and attempers the vital Warmth; promotes and exalts the animal Secretions.—Many Days We might live, or even whole Months, without the Light of the Sun, or the Glimmering of a Star. Whereas, if We are deprived, only for a few Minutes, of this aerial Support, We ſicken, We faint, We die.—The ſame *univerſal Nurſe* has a conſiderable Share, in cheriſhing the ſeveral Tribes of Plants. It helps to transfuſe vegetable Vigour into the Trunk of the Oak, and a blooming Gaiety into the Spread of the Roſe.

The Air undertakes to convey to our Noſtrils the extremely ſubtil *Effluvia*, which tranſpire from odoriferous Bodies. Thoſe detached Particles are ſo imperceptibly ſmall, that they would elude the moſt careful Hand, or eſcape the niceſt Eye. But this truſty Depoſitary *receives* and *eſcorts* the inviſible Vagrants, without loſing ſo much as a ſingle Atom. Entertaining Us, by this Means, with the delightful

Muſic. Which makes me wonder, that *Horace*, ſpeaking of theſe ſprightly Songſters, and their pleaſing Harmony, ſhould ſay;

Queruntur *in Sylvis Aves*,

ful Senſations, which ariſe from the Fragrance of Flowers; and admoniſhing Us, by the Tranſmiſſion of offenſive Smells, to withdraw from an unwholeſome Situation, or beware of any pernicious Food.

The Air, by its undulating Motion, conducts to our Ear all the Diverſities of *Sound*; and, thereby diſcharges the Duty of a moſt ſeaſonable and faithful Monitor. As I walk acroſs the Streets of *London*, with my Eye engaged on other Objects; a Dray, perhaps with all its Load, is driving down directly upon me. Or, as I ride along the Road, muſing and unapprehenſive, a Chariot and ſix is whirling on, with a rapid Career, at the Heels of my Horſe. The Air, like a *vigilant* Friend, in pain for my Welfare, immediately takes the Alarm: and, while the Danger is at a conſiderable Diſtance, diſpatches a Courier to advertiſe me of the approaching Miſchief. It even thunders in my Ear; and, with a *clamorous* but *kind* Importunity, urges me to be upon my Guard, and provide for my Safety.

The Air wafts to our Senſe all the Modulations of *Muſic*, and the more agreeable Entertainments of refined Converſation. When *Myrtilla* ſtrikes the ſilver Strings, and teaches the willing Harpſichord to warble with her CREATOR's Praiſe: when her ſacred Sonata warms the Heart with Devotion, and wings our Deſires to Heaven.—When *Cleora* tunes her Song, or the Nightingale imitates her enchanting Voice: when She heightens every melodious Note, with her adored REDEEMER's Name; and ſo ſmooths her charming Tones, ſo breathes her rapturous Soul, "that GOD's own "Ear liſtens delighted."—When Wiſdom takes its

Seat on *Mitio*'s Tongue; and flows, in perſpicuous Periods, and inſtructive Truths, amidſt the choſen Circle of his Acquaintance.—When Benevolence, aſſociated with Perſuaſion, dwell on *Nicander*'s Lips; and plead the Cauſe of injured Innocence, or oppreſſed Virtue.—When Goodneſs, leagued with Happineſs, accompany *Euſebius* into the Pulpit; and reclaim the Libertine from the Slavery of his Vices; diſengage the Infidel from the Faſcination of his Prejudices; and ſo affectionately, ſo pathetically invite the whole Audience, to partake the unequaled Joys of pure Religion.—In all theſe Caſes, the Air diſtributes every muſical Variation with the utmoſt *Exactneſs*; and delivers the Speaker's Meſſage, with the moſt punctual *Fidelity*. Whereas, without this Internuntio, all would be ſullen and unmeaning Silence. We ſhould loſe both the Pleaſure and the Profit; neither be charmed with the harmonious, nor improved by the articulate Accents.

The Air, when vague and unconfined, is ſo very gentle; that it ſports, with the moſt inoffenſive Wantonneſs, amidſt *Ophelia*'s Locks, and ſcarce diſadjuſts a ſingle Curl. But, when collected and applied by the Contrivance of Man, it acts with ſuch *prodigious Force*; as is ſufficient to whirl round the hugeſt Wheels, though clogged with the moſt incumbering Loads. It makes the ponderous Mill-ſtones move as ſwiftly, as the Dancer's Heel: and the maſſy Beams play as nimbly, as the Muſician's Finger.

If We climb, in Speculation, the higher Regions, We find an endleſs Succeſſion of *Clouds*, fed by

by Evaporations from the Ocean.—The Clouds are themſelves a Kind of Ocean, ſuſpended in the Air with amazing Skill. They travel, in detached Parties, and in the Quality of *itinerant Ciſterns*, round all the terreſtrial Globe. They fructify, by proper Communications of Moiſture, the ſpacious Paſtures of the Wealthy; and gladden, with no leſs liberal Showers, the Cottager's little Spot. Nay, ſo condeſcending is the Benignity of their great PROPRIETOR, that they *ſatisfy the deſolate and waſte Ground*; *and cauſe*, even in the moſt uncultivated Wilds, *the Bud of the tender Herb to ſpring forth* *. That the Natives of the lonely Deſart, thoſe ſavage Herds which know no Maſter's Stall, may nevertheleſs experience the Care, and rejoice in the Bounty, of an All-ſupporting PARENT.

How wonderful! That the Water, which is much *denſer* and far *heavier* than the Air, ſhould riſe into it; make its Way through it; and take a Station in the very uppermoſt Regions of it! This, One would imagine, were almoſt as impoſſible, as for the Rivers to run back to their Source. Yet Providence has contrived a Way, to render it not only practicable, but Matter of continual Occurrence.

How wonderful! That *pendant Lakes* ſhould be diffuſed, or *liquid Mountains* heaped over our Heads; and both ſuſtained in the thinneſt Parts of the Atmoſphere! We little think of that ſurpriſing Expedient, which, without Conduits of Stone, or Veſſels of Braſs, keeps ſuch Loads of Water in a buoyant State. *Job* and *Elihu* conſidered this, and were ſtruck with holy Admiration. *Doſt thou know the Balancings*

* Job xxxviii. 27.

Balancings of the Clouds? How ſuch ponderous Bodies are made to hang with an even Poiſe, and hover like the lighteſt Down? Theſe are *the wondrous Works of HIM, who is perfect in Knowledge* *. *He bindeth up the Waters in his thick Clouds; and the Cloud,* though nothing is more looſe and fluctuating, becomes, by his Almighty Order, ſtrong and tenacious as Caſks of Iron; it *is not rent* † under all the Weight.

When the Sluices are opened, and the Waters deſcend, We might reaſonably ſuſpect; that they would ruſh down in Cataracts, more rapid and impetuous, than the Mountain Torrent. Thus would they be dreadfully pernicious. They would deſtroy every Thing, where they happened to fall; and leave other Parts of the Ground, deſtitute of neceſſary Moiſture.—Whereas, now, inſtead of ſuch a diſorderly and precipitate Effuſion, they coaleſce into *Globules*, and are diſpenſed in gentle *Showers*. They are often attenuated into the Smallneſs of a Hair ‡; they ſpread themſelves, as if they were ſtrained through the Orifices of the fineſt Watering-pot; and form thoſe *ſmall Drops of Rain, which the Clouds diſtil upon Man abundantly* ‖. Thus, inſtead of drowning the Earth, and ſweeping away its Fruits, they cheriſh univerſal Nature; and, in Conformity to the Practice of their great MASTER, diſtribute their humid Stores to Men, to Ani-

* Job xxxvii. 16. † Job xxvi. 8.

‡ The *Hebrew* Words, which convey the Idea of gentle *Rain*, ſignify a Portion of Water, made ſmall as a *Hair*, or divided into *Millions* of Parts, שעירים ורביבים Deut. xxxii. 2.

‖ Job xxxvi. 28.

Animals, and Vegetables, *as they are able to bear them* *.

Beſides the Reſervoirs of Water, here are cantoned various Parties of *Winds*, mild or fierce, gentle or boiſterous. Furniſhed with breezy Wings, to fan the glowing Firmament, and diffuſe Refreſhment on a fainting World: or elſe, fitted to act as an univerſal *Beſom*; and, by ſweeping the Chambers of the Atmoſphere, to preſerve the fine aerial Fluid free from Feculencies. Without this wholeſome Agency of the Winds, the Air would ſtagnate; would ſoon become putrid; and ſurround Us, in the literal Senſe of the Words, with *Darkneſs that might be felt* †. *London*, *Paris*, and all the great Cities in the World, inſtead of being the Seats of Elegance, would degenerate into Sinks of Corruption.

Let the Inhabitants of *Jamaica* or *Japan*, let the Natives of *Guinea* or *Peru*, expreſs the Value of this elementary Gift. How could they ſubſiſt, in thoſe torrid Regions, without this beſt of Viſitants, the cool diurnal Breeze? Alas! how would their Blood boil; how would their Spirits fail; and their *Strength be dried up like a Potſherd!* Without this ſalutary Breeze, the Air would be liquid Fire; their Houſes the Reſidence of Fevers; and their Clime, as it were, the Ante-chamber to Hell.—But the freſh and ſprightly Gales conſtantly riſe with the riſing Sun; and ply the Fan, without Intermiſſion, around both Men and Beaſts. This qualifies and tempers the otherwiſe intolerable Heat; this ſheds Comfort, and ſupports Health; this is, amidſt their burning Abodes, the very Balm of Life.

* Mark iv. 33. † Exod. x. 21.

Life.—Not all the aromatic Odours, nor all the ambroſial Sweets of thoſe fruitful Iſlands, are half ſo agreeable to the Taſte or the Smell, as theſe Gales are recreating and grateful to the Lungs. And what—Ah! what were all the Ivory and the Gold of thoſe wealthy Continents? How dim their Luſtre! How inſignificant their Traffic! If ſeparated from this incomparably better Commerce with the ever-undulating Sky!—Yet there is one Species of Commerce, one Kind of ſacred Intercourſe, preferable, infinitely preferable even to theſe ſweet, ſovereign, elementary Refreſhments. The Church ſeems to pant and gaſp after it, as a thirſty Land. Her Wants I feel, and her Wiſhes I adopt. *Awake, O North-wind, and come thou South-wind*; come, thou all-reviving, all-enlivening SPIRIT, *and blow upon my Garden*, or rather upon the poor, parched, barren Deſart of my Soul; *that the Spices*, or ſome Savour of Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs, *may flow out*.

At *Sea*, the Winds ſwell the Mariner's Sails, and ſpeed his Courſe along the watery Way: ſpeed it far more effectually, than a thouſand Rowers, bending to their Strokes, and tugging at the Oar.—By *Land*, they perform the Office of an immenſe Seed-man, and ſcatter abroad the reproductive Principles of a Multitude of Plants; which, though the Staff of Life to many Animals, are too ſmall for the Management, or too mean for the Attention of Man. *GOD bringeth the Winds out of his Treaſuries* *, is a very juſt and edifying Obſervation. Whether We conſider it, as a Deſcription of his abſolute and uncontroulable Dominion over this potent Meteor;

* Pſal. cxxxv. 7.

Meteor; *He bringeth*; *He maketh it to come*; like ſome tame ſequacious Animal, which hearkens to a Word, or obeys the Nod. Or whether We contemplate the welcome and kindly Influence of the Meteor itſelf, on all the Face of Nature; He bringeth it, not from the Armoury, where the Weapons of Vengeance are depoſited; but from *his Treaſuries*, whence proceed the convenient, the beneficial, and the deſirable.

Here are *Lightnings* ſtationed. Though dormant at preſent, they are in act to ſpring, and launch the livid Flame: whenever their piercing Flaſh is neceſſary. Neceſſary to deſtroy the ſulphureous and peſtilential Vapours; or to diſlodge thoſe floating Dregs, which might corrupt the Purity of the Æther, and obſcure its more than cryſtalline Tranſparency.—This fierceſt of Fires (ſee the ſtupendous Operations of JEHOVAH!) is engendered by the coldeſt of Elements. That blazing Bolt, which cleaves the Foreſt Oaks with a Stroke; that penetrating Flame, which melts the Bars of Steel with a Touch; are the Offspring of Water, and iſſue from the Womb of a Cloud. *HE maketh Lightnings* *, ſaith the inſpired Philoſopher, not as an Efflux from the Sun; but (amazing Aſſociation!) as an Appendage or Concomitant *for the Rain*.

In the magnificent Arch of the Sky, is ſituate a *radiant* Orb, which enlightens the Tracts, chears the Inhabitants, and colours all the Productions, of this habitable Globe. The Air, by a ſingular Addreſs in managing the Rays, amplifies their Uſefulneſs;

* Pſal. cxxxv. 7.

fulneſs: its *reflecting* Power * augments that Heat, which is the Life of Nature; its *refracting* Power prolongs that Splendor, which is the Beauty of the Creation.—Theſe Emanations of Light, though formed of inactive Matter, yet (aſtoniſhing Apparatus of eternal Wiſdom!) are refined almoſt to the *Subtilty* of Spirit, and are ſcarce inferior even to Thought in *Speed*. By which Means, they ſpread themſelves, with a Kind of inſtantaneous Swiftneſs, through the Circumference of a whole Hemiſphere; and though they fill, wherever they pervade, yet they ſtraiten no Place, embarraſs no One, incumber Nothing.

Theſe give the Diamond its Brilliancy, and the Velvet its Gloſs: to theſe the chearful Eye is obliged for its lively Sparkle, and the modeſt Cheek for its roſy Bluſh. Theſe, attending the judicious Touches of the Pencil, bid the Drapery flow, and the embodied

* The Air is a curious *Cover*, which, without oppreſſing the Inhabitants of the Earth with any perceivable Weight, confines, reflects, and thereby *increaſes* the vivifying Heat of the Sun. The Air increaſes this kindly Heat, much in the ſame Manner as our Garments by Day, or Bed-clothes by Night, give additional Warmth to our Bodies.—Whereas, when the aerial Veſtment grows thin, or, to ſpeak more philoſophically, when the Air comes leſs in Quantity, and more *attenuated* in Quality, the ſolar Warmth is very ſenſibly diminiſhed. Travelers on the lofty Mountains of *America*, ſometimes experience, to their terrible Coſt, the Truth of this Obſervation. Though the Clime, at the Foot of thoſe prodigious Hills, is even hot and ſultry; yet on their Summits, the Cold rages with ſuch exceſſive Severity, that it is no unuſual Calamity, for the Horſe and his Rider to be frozen to death.—We have therefore great Reaſon to bleſs the Supreme DISPOSER of Things, for placing Us in the *commodious* Concavity, or rather under the *cheriſhing* Wings of an Atmoſphere,

bodied Figure riſe; bid the Countenance wear the calm Serenity of Thought, or be agitated with the wild Tranſports of Paſſion.—Without this Circumſtance of *Colour*, we ſhould want all the Entertainments of Viſion, and be at a Loſs to diſtinguiſh one Thing from another. We ſhould heſitate to pronounce, and muſt take a little Journey to determine, whether yonder Incloſure contains a Piece of Paſturage, or a Plot of arable Land. We ſhould queſtion, and could not very expeditiouſly reſolve, whether the next Perſon We meet, be a Soldier in his Regimentals, or a Swain in his Holiday Suit? A Bride in her Ornaments, or a Widow in her Weeds. But Colour, like a particular Livery, characterizes the Claſs, to which every Individual belongs. It is the *Label*, which indicates, upon the firſt Inſpection, its reſpective Quality. It is the *Ticket*, which guides our Choice, and directs our Hand *.

The

* This, I believe, ſuggeſts the true Senſe of thoſe noble Similitudes, uſed by the divine Speaker. *It is turned as Clay to the Seal, and they ſtand as a Garment: It*, the Earth and all its Productions receive, from the riſing Sun, both Colour and Beauty. Juſt as the ſoft Clay, and the melting Wax, receive an elegant Impreſſion from the Seal.—*They* (the Morning and the Day-ſpring, mentioned in a preceding Verſe) *ſtand as a Garment*; they act the Part of a magnificent and univerſal Clothing; give all viſible Objects, their comely Aſpect, and graceful Diſtinctions. *Job* xxxviii. 14.

What Images are here! How bold, and how fine! The *Sea* had been deſcribed as an *Infant* before the ALMIGHTY. Like an Infant, changeable, froward, and impetuous, with thick Darkneſs for its Swadling-band. The Light is repreſented as an *Handmaid*, attending to *dreſs* the Creation; and executing the CREATOR's Orders, with a Punctuality that never fails, with a *Speed* that cannot be equalled.

The Sun, I ſaid, was *fituate*. But it is rather itinerant, than reſident. It paſſes through the Firmament; and, having ſupplied Us with Light for ſeveral Hours, carries Day into the other Hemiſphere.—What then ſhall We do, when the Fountain of Light is ſealed, or its Communications are with-held?—A Supply is provided. The Stars appear, like thouſands of flaming Torches. Chiefly the Moon, at certain Seaſons, ſucceeds to the Office of furniſhing Us with the welcome Bleſſing.—But the Moon is a dark Body. How then can it impart, what it does not poſſeſs? Providence, infinitely rich in Contrivances, has found out a Method. Than which nothing can be more ſimple, yet nothing more effectual. The Moon, being at a proper Diſtance, receives and reflects the Rays of the Sun. Which are ſo ſtrong in themſelves, that they reach, even in their reverberated Direction, as far as our Globe. Yet are rendered, by this Reflection, ſoft and gentle. Inſomuch, that they afford Us a moſt commodious and chearing Illumination; ſuch as qualifies the Horrors of Darkneſs, without any Diminution of its compoſing Nature, and ſoporiferous Influence.—Thus the Sun lightens Us, by the Intervention of the Moon, when He is departed many Degrees beyond our Sight.

We have curſorily ſurveyed the *upper Rooms* of our great Habitation, and taken a Turn along the *Ground-floor*; if We deſcend into the ſubterraneous Lodgments, the *Cellars* of the ſtately Structure, We ſhall there alſo find the moſt exquiſite Contrivance, acting in Concert with the moſt profuſe Goodneſs.—Here are various *Minerals*, of ſovereign

Efficacy in Medicine: which rectify the vitiated Blood, and quicken the languid Spirits; which often rekindle the fading Bloom in the Virgin's Complexion, and reinvigorate the enfeebled Arm of Manhood.—Here are Beds fraught with *Metals* of the richeſt Value. From hence come the golden Treaſures, from hence the ſilver Stores, which are the very Life of Traffic; and circulate through the Body politic, as the vital Fluid through the animal Frame. Which, in the refining Hand of Charity, are Feet to the Lame, and Eyes to the Blind, and make the Widow's Heart ſing for Joy.

Here are Mines, which yield a Metal of meaner Aſpect, but of a firmer Coheſion, and of ſuperior Uſefulneſs *. A Metal, that conſtitutes almoſt all the Implements, with which Art and Induſtry execute their various Deſigns. Without the Aſſiſtance of *Iron*, Buſineſs would be reduced to the loweſt Ebb; Commerce would feel her Wings clipped; and every Species of mechanic Skill, either utterly fail, or be miſerably baffled. Without the Aſſiſtance of Iron, it would be almoſt impoſſible to rear the ſteady Maſt, to diſplay the daring Canvas, or drop the faithful Anchor. Deſtitute of this ever-needful Commodity, we ſhould have no Plow to furrow the Soil, no Shuttle to traverſe the Loom, ſcarce any Ornament for polite, or any Utenſil for ordinary Life.

Here is an inexhauſted Fund of *combuſtible* Materials †, which ſupply the whole Nation with Fuel. Theſe

* *Ferrum, licet Metallorum pretio ultimum, Neceſſitate tamen primum.* PLIN.

† *As for the Earth,* ſays *Job, out of it cometh Bread:* Corn, Vegetables, and whatever is good for Food, ſpring

Theſe preſent their Miniſtrations in the Kitchen; and yielding themſelves as Aliment to the Flame, render our Food both palatable and healthy.—Theſe offer their Service at the Forge; and, with their piercing Heat, mollify the moſt ſtubborn Bars, till they become pliant to the Stroke of the Hammer.—The *Coals* pour themſelves likewiſe into the Glaſs-houſes. They rage, amidſt thoſe aſtoniſhing Furnaces, with irreſiſtible but uſeful Fierceneſs. They liquify even the obdurate Flint, and make the moſt rigid Subſtances far more ductile, than the ſofteſt Clay, or the melting Wax: make them obſequious, not only to the lighteſt Touch, but to the Impreſſions of our very Breath.

By this Means, we are furniſhed, and from the coarſeſt Ingredients, with one of the moſt curious and valuable Manufactures in the World. A Manufacture, which tranſmits the Light and Warmth of the Sun into our Houſes; yet excludes the Annoyance of the Raine, and the Violence of the Winds. Which gives *new Eyes* to decrepit Age, and vaſtly *more enlarged* Views to Philoſophy and Science. Which leads up the Aſtronomer's Diſcernment, even to the *Satellites* of *Saturn*; and carries down the Naturaliſt's Obſervation, as far as the Animalcule Race: bringing near what is immenſely remote, and making viſible what, to our unaſſiſted Sight, would be abſolutely imperceptible.

We have alſo, when both Sun and Moon withdraw their Shining, an Expedient to ſupply their Place.

from its Surface. While *under it, is turned up as it were Fire:* its lower Parts תחתיה its deeper Strata, yield combuſtible Materials; which are eaſily inkindled into Fire, and adminiſter the moſt ſubſtantial Fuel for the Flame. *Job* xxviii. 5.

Place. We can create an *artificial* Day in our Rooms, and prolong our Studies, or purſue our Buſineſs, under its chearing Influence. With beaming Tapers and ruddy Fires, We *chaſe* the Darkneſs, and *mitigate* * the Cold; We cheriſh Converſation, and cultivate the ſocial Spirit. We render thoſe very Intervals of Time, ſome of the moſt delightful Portions of our Life, which otherwiſe would be a joyleſs and unimproving Void.

Theſe obſcure Caverns are the Birth-place of the moſt ſparkling Gems; *of Onyx-ſtones*; *of gliſtering*

 Stones,

* I can hardly forbear tranſcribing the grateful and pious Remark, which *Socrates* makes on this Occaſion. Demonſtrating, from the advantageous and benign Conſtitution of Things, GOD's indulgent Care for Mankind, He aſks; Το δε και το πυρ πορισαι ημιν, επικουρον μεν ψυχους, επικουρον δε σκοτους, συνεργον δε προς πασαν τεχνην, και παντα οσα ωφελειας ενεκα ανθρωποι κατασκευαζονται; Ως γαρ συνελοντι ειπειν, ουδεν αξιολογον ανευ πυρος ανθρωποι των προς βιον χρησιμων κατασκευαζονται.—To which his Pupil very intelligently replies, Υπερβαλλει και τουτο φιλανθρωπια. *Vid.* Socrat. *Memor.* Lib. IV. A Work, which may be ranked among the *fineſt* Remains of Antiquity. *Equal*, it is acknowledged, to any of the antient Compoſitions in Purity of Style, and Dignity of Sentiment. *Superior*, I think, to them all, for the artful, delicate, and happy Manner of conveying Inſtruction.

I wiſh, the Author of the preceding Dialogues had been better acquainted with the *Socratic* Method; and I could wiſh, that young Students for the Miniſtry would adopt the Skill of this *heathen* Philoſopher. Perhaps, no Qualification of human Growth, would more effectually contribute to render them, what St. *Paul* ſtyles διδακτικους.—It ſeems to be the moſt *inſinuating* and *ſucceſsful* Way both to convince and inſtruct. Nay, it convinces the Opponent out of his own Mouth, and makes the Pupil inſtruct himſelf. It is what the TEACHER ſent from GOD practiſed, in thoſe incomparable Sketches of faithful Admonition and maſterly Addreſs, The Parable of the *two Debtors*, and of the *good Samaritan*. Luke vii. 41. Luke x. 30.

Stones, and all Manner of precious Stones. Which, when nicely poliſhed, advantageouſly ſet, and prodigal of their Luſtre, ſtand Candidates for a Place on the royal Crown, or a Seat on the *virtuous* Fair One's Breaſt. I will not, with our Men of Gallantry ſay, they emulate the living Brilliancy of her Eyes; rather they ſerve as a Foil, to ſet off the Beauties of her accompliſhed Mind, and amiable Converſation. *Whoſe Price*, according to the unerring Eſtimate of Inſpiration, is ſuperior to Sapphires, *is far above Rubies* *.—If theſe ſhining Rarities, extracted from the Cabinets of the Earth, are an Ornament to Some, are they not an Incitement to All? All who have read thoſe animating and glorious Words; *They ſhall be mine, ſaith the LORD, in the Day when I make up my Jewels* †.

Here are *Quarries*, ſtocked with Stones, inferior in Beauty to the Jeweler's Ware, but much more eminently beneficial. Which, when properly ranged, and cemented with a tenacious Mortar, form the convenient Abodes of Peace, and build the ſtrongeſt Fortifications of War: defending Us from the Inclemencies of the Weather, and the more formidable Aſſaults of our Enemies. Theſe conſtitute the Arches of the Bridge, which convey the Traveler, with perfect Security, over the deep and rapid Stream; enabling both Man and Horſe to paſs, with eaſy Intercourſe, from one Bank of the broadeſt River to another. Theſe give Us the rocky Girdles of our *Quays*, and ſtrengthen the Arms, the ſtupendous Arms of the *Mole:* which ſtretch themſelves far into the Ocean; curb the Impetuoſity of the Surge; and ſkreen the helpleſs Bark, while tempeſtuous

* Prov. xxxi. 10. † Mal. iii. 17.

tempeſtuous Waves, like a Savage diſappointed of its Prey, foam, and roar, and rage around.

Theſe ſtony Treaſures are comparatively *ſoft*, while they continue in the Bowels of the Earth; but acquire an increaſing *Hardneſs*, when expoſed to the open Air. Was this remarkable Peculiarity reverſed, what Difficulties would attend the Labours of the Maſon? His Materials could not be extracted from their Bed, nor faſhioned for his Purpoſe, without infinite Toil. Suppoſe his Work completed, it could not long withſtand the Fury of the Elements; but inſenſibly mouldering, or inceſſantly decaying, would elude the Expectations of the Owner; perhaps, might prove an immature Grave, inſtead of a durable Dwelling.

Here are vaſt *Layers of Clay*. Which however contemptible in its Appearance, is abundantly more advantageous, than the Rocks of Diamond, or the Veins of Gold. This is moulded, with great Expedition and Eaſe, into Veſſels of any Shape, and of almoſt every Size. Some, ſo delicately *fine*, that they compoſe the moſt elegant and ornamental Furniture, for the Tea-table of a Princeſs. Others, ſo remarkably *cheap*, that they are ranged on the Shelves, and miniſter at the Meals, of the Peaſant. All ſo perfectly *neat*, that no Liquid takes the leaſt Taint, nor the niceſt Palate any Diſguſt, from their cleanly Services.—The CREATOR, who never forgets and never neglects even the meaneſt of the People, has diſtributed this moſt neceſſary Kind of Earth in the greateſt Abundance. It is found in every Country, almoſt in every Field. It lies near the Surface, and is obtained with little Labour,

and with very little Expence. Thus *haſt Thou, O GOD, of thy Goodneſs, prepared for the Poor.*

A Multiplicity of other Stores, are locked up by Providence, in thoſe ample Vaults. The *Key* of all is committed to the Management of *Induſtry*; with free Permiſſion to produce each particular Species, as Neceſſity ſhall demand, or Prudence direct.

Which ſhall we moſt admire, the bountiful Heart, the liberal Hand, or the All-diſcerning Eye of our Great CREATOR? How obſervable, how admirable is the *Precaution*, in removing theſe uſeful but cumbrous Wares, from the Superficies; and ſtowing them, in proper Repoſitories or Lumber-rooms, beneath our Feet!—Were they ſcattered over the Surface, the Ground would be choaked and *embarraſſed* with the enormous Heaps. Our Roads would be blocked up, and ſcarce any Portion left free for the Operations of Huſbandry.—Were they buried extremely deep, or ſunk to the Center of the Globe, it would coſt Us immenſe Pains to procure them; or rather, they would be quite *inacceſſible*.—Were they uniformly ſpread into a Pavement for Nature; the Trees could not ſtrike their Roots, nor the Herbs ſhoot their Blades, but univerſal *Sterility* muſt enſue.—Whereas, by their preſent Diſpoſition, they furniſh Us with a Magazine of metallic, without cauſing any Diminution of our vegetable Treaſures. Foſſils of every ſplendid and ſerviceable Kind enrich the *Bowels*, while Bloom and Verdure embelliſh the *Face* of the Earth.

So judicious is the Arrangement of this grand Edifice! So beneficent the Deſtination of its whole Furni-

Furniture *! In which, all is regulated with conſummate Skill, and touched into the higheſt Perfection. All moſt exactly adapted to the various Intentions of Providence, and the manifold Exigencies of Mankind. Supplying *every Want*, We can feel; and gratifying *every Wiſh*, We can form.

Inſomuch, that the whole Syſtem affords a favourite Topic of Praiſe, even to thoſe diſtinguiſhed Beings, who *ſtand on the Sea of Glaſs, and have the Harps of GOD in their Hands.* They lift their Voice and ſing, *Great and marvelous are thy Works, O LORD GOD Almighty* †!—And is there not Reaſon, my *Aſpaſio* would ſay, infinite Reaſon, for *Us* to join this triumphant Choir? Adding Gratitude to our Wonder, and Love to our Hallelujahs? Since all theſe Things are to Us, not merly Objects of Contemplation, but Sources of Accommodation: not only a majeſtic Spectacle, bright with the Diſplay of our CREATOR's Wiſdom, but an inеſtimable Gift, rich with the Emanations of his Goodneſs. The Earth hath He *ſet before* the Inhabitants of Glory, but *the Earth hath he* given *to*

* No Notice is taken of the *Ocean*, in this little *Rent-roll* of Nature's Wealth; becauſe a diſtinct Sketch is given of that grand Receptacle and its principal Services, in *Letter* IX.

† *Rev.* xv. 3. *Great and marvelous are thy Works, O LORD GOD Almighty! Juſt and true are thy Ways, Thou KING of Saints!* The firſt Part ſeems to mean, what the inſpired Writer calls, *The Song of Moſes.* The ſecond contains, what he ſtyles, *The Song of the LAMB.* The firſt, I ſhould imagine, relates to the ſtupendous Works of Creation. The ſecond alludes to the far more wonderful Scheme of Redemption. The former, deſcribing the Syſtem of Nature, is recorded by *Moſes*; the latter, comprehending the Salvation of the Saints, is accompliſhed by *CHRIST.*

the Children of Men *.—Having given Us Ourſelves; given Us a World; has He not a Right, a moſt unqueſtionable Right, to make that tender Demand? *My Son, give me thy Heart* †.

Shall I add another Paſſage? Which, viewed with any but the laſt Paragraph, will be like *the Head of Gold*, eminent and conſpicuous on *Feet of Iron and Clay*. It is taken from the fineſt philoſophical Oration, that ever was made. I never read it, but with a Glow of Delight, and with Impreſſions of Awe. It is, in ſhort, inimitably ſpirited and ſublime.—You think, perhaps, I act an impolitic Part, in being ſo laviſh of my Praiſe; and that the Quotation muſt ſuffer, by ſuch an *aggrandizing* Introduction. But I am under no Apprehenſions of this Kind. Forbear to be delighted, if You can; ceaſe to admire, if You can; when You hear OMNISCIENCE itſelf declaring, That, on Sight of this univerſal Fabric, emerging out of Nothing, THE MORNING STARS SANG TOGETHER, AND ALL THE SONS OF GOD SHOUTED FOR JOY ‡.—The Syſtem was ſo graceful, ſo magnificent, and, in all Reſpects, ſo exquiſitely finiſhed; that the moſt accompliſhed Intelligences were charmed, were tranſported. They knew not how to expreſs themſelves on the great Occaſion, but in *Shouts* of Exultation, and *Songs* of Praiſe. Is it poſſible for Imagination to conceive an Encomium, ſo juſt, ſo high, ſo beautifully noble!—I am ſure, after ſo much Delicacy, and Majeſty of Sentiment, any thing of mine muſt be

* Pſal. cxv. 16. † Prov. xxiii. 26. ‡ Job xxxviii. 7.

be intolerably flat; unleſs You will except this one Profeſſion, that I am, with the moſt cordial Sincerity,

My dear Aſpaſio,

Inviolably Yours,

THERON.

LETTER VII.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

My dear THERON,

IF You write with ſuch a View, and from ſuch a Motive, as are mentioned in your laſt, expect no more *free-will* Offerings from my Pen. In this one Inſtance, I ſhall think it my Duty to be covetous. I ſhall act the Miſer out of Principle; and hardly perſuade myſelf to part with a ſingle Line, till it is become an undeniable *Debt*. I muſt turn your own Artifice on Yourſelf; and lay You under a Neceſſity of obliging, entertaining, and edifying me by your Correſpondence.

For, give me Leave to aſſure You, that I am always delighted, and always improved by your Epiſtles. They ſhew me a Multitude of Beauties in the Creation, which I ſhould not otherwiſe have diſcerned. They point out the infinite Power, the unſearchable Wiſdom, and the charmingly rich Goodneſs of the glorious MAKER. Such a

Philoſophy turns all Nature into a *School* of Inſtruction, and is no contemptible *Handmaid* to true Religion. It makes every Object a Step, better than a golden Step, to raiſe both our Knowledge and our Affections to the adorable and immortal CAUSE of all. Engaged in ſuch Speculations, We cry out with the Pſalmiſt; *O LORD our Governor, how excellent is thy Name in all the Earth* *!

There is but one Circumſtance wanting, to complete the Pleaſure, which I receive from your Obſervations.—The *Sun*, You took Notice, is the grand Ornament of this magnificent Syſtem. That which gives Colour and Form, the comely Aſpect and graceful Diſtinction, to all material Objects.—This the bodily Eye perceives and acknowledges. But to the intellectual and believing Eye, the *Sun of Righteouſneſs* is a much grander, and no leſs neceſſary Ornament. This adorns the Univerſe, and communicates a Glory to every Object; as it manifeſts, in the cleareſt brighteſt Manner, all the Perfections of the GODHEAD. But, to this lower World, it gives a very peculiar Luſtre.—A poor Peaſant reckons it the higheſt Honour to his Cottage, that it has once lodged a Prince, or accommodated a Monarch. With infinitely greater Reaſon may theſe elementary Abodes glory, that they have accommodated, not for a ſingle Night, but for many Years, *the LORD of Heaven*. That the KING of Kings was their Tenant even from his Birth in the Stable, to his Death on the Croſs.

Yes, *Theron*; it is the greateſt Glory of this Air, that it furniſhed IMMANUEL with Breath. Yonder Sun may boaſt, that it ſhone upon his Foot-

* Pſal. viii. 9.

Foot-ſteps. That Ground, cumbrous as it is, might even leap for Joy, that it bore ſo divine a Gueſt. And all the Elements may clap their Hands, that they had the Privilege of adminiſtring to his Nouriſhment.—As to Us Men, it is our moſt honourable Diſtinction, and ſhould be our continual Triumph, that HE lived and died *among ſt* Us; yea, lived and died *for* Us. That, having united our Nature to Himſelf, He has carried it into the Heaven of Heavens. Where it ſhines, with tranſcendent Majeſty and Beauty, as the eternal Ornament of the Creation of GOD.—Methinks, therefore, this noble and delightful Conſideration, ſhould intermingle itſelf with all our Contemplations, on the Works of Nature. Juſt as the Beams of the Sun intermingle their Light, with all the Regions of the Firmament; and diffuſe their Heat, over all the Face of the Earth.

While I am roving heedleſly along, your Remarks often interpoſe, like ſome intelligent faithful Monitor, who claps his Hand upon my Breaſt, and ſays; *Stand ſtill, and conſider the wondrous Works of GOD* *.—Willingly I obey the Admonition. The *Chriſtian* may, with peculiar Complacency, conſider this grand Theatre of Wonders, this copious Magazine of Bleſſings. Becauſe, conſcious of an Intereſt in *JESUS*, He has a Right to call them all *his own* †. He may look round upon preſent Things; He may look forward unto future Things; and, truſting in his SAVIOUR's Merit, may confidently ſay—"Not one only, but *both* theſe Worlds "are

* Job xxxvii. 14.

† 1 *Cor.* iii. 22. *All Things are yours*; becauſe *Ye are CHRIST's.*

" are mine. By virtue of my REDEEMER's " Righteouſneſs, I have a Covenant-right to the " neceſſary Accommodations of this Life; and, " on the ſame unſhaken Footing, I ſtand intitled " to the inconceivable Felicity of a better."

Surely then it muſt be as pleaſing an Employ, to examine the *Validity* of our *Title* to future Things, as to eſtimate the Value of our preſent Poſſeſſions. *You* have executed the one. Let *me* attempt the other.—An Attempt, never unſeaſonable, now particularly proper. Since it is expreſly required by your Pen, and ſuggeſted by the very Subject of your Epiſtle. Eſpecially, as I look upon the *juſtifying Righteouſneſs*, to be no leſs the peculiar Workmanſhip and Gift of GOD, than the Scenes of Creation and the Productions of Nature. And as I would fain have every Thing that is beautiful, every Thing that is magnificent in this viſible Syſtem, ſerve as a Foil to our REDEEMER's Glory; to the Glory of his Perſon, and the Importance of that Service, which He has performed for Sinners.

You have ſurveyed material Nature. It appears to be a fair and ſtately Manſion. For the Purpoſes, which it is intended to anſwer, completely furniſhed, and completely finiſhed. Is not our SAVIOUR's *Obedience*, the Proviſion made for indigent and guilty Souls, equally rich and equally perfect?—Since this is everlaſting and immutable; ſince the other is tranſient and periſhable; doubtleſs We may argue with the judicious Apoſtle: *If that which is to be done away*, which will ſoon be conſigned over to Diſſolution, *is glorious*; *much more that which remaineth*,

maineth, whoſe bleſſed Effects continue to eternal Ages, *is glorious* *.

We are, every One, *as an unclean Thing* †. Our very Nature is contaminated. Even Sanctification, though it deſtroys the reigning, does not wholly ſuperſede the polluting Power of Iniquity. So that whatever Graces We exerciſe, whatever Duties We perform (like Rays of Light tranſmitted through coloured Glaſs, or like generous Wine ſtreaming from a defiled Caſk) they receive ſome improper Tinge, or contract ſome debaſing Taint. But *CHRIST* was entirely free from this *innate* Contagion. He had no corrupt Bias upon his Will, nor any irregular Tendency in his Affections.

Being thus free from original Corruption, *He did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth* ‡. Not one vain Imagination paſſed through his Mind, nor breathed the ſlighteſt Stain upon his Thoughts. All his Words were irreproachable, and every Action blameleſs.—The moſt accompliſhed among the Children of Men, when ſurpriſed in ſome unguarded Moment, or aſſaulted on ſome weak Side, have been betrayed into Error, or hurried into Sin. Even *Moſes* ſpake unadviſedly with his Lips; and *Aaron*, the Saint of the LORD, warped to idolatrous Practices. *They* were like ſome ſtagnating *Lake*; in which, the Dregs being ſubſided, the Waters appear clean; but when ſtirred by Temptation, or agitated by Affliction, the Sediment riſes, and the Pool is diſcoloured. Whereas, *CHRIST* may be compared to a *Fountain*, that is all Tranſparency, and pure to the very Bottom: which, however ſhaken,

* 2 Cor. iii. 11. † Iſai. lxiv. 6. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 22.

ſhaken, however diſturbed, is nothing but fluid Cryſtal; permanently and unalterably clear.

It was a ſmall Thing for the bleſſed *JESUS*, to be influenced by no depraved Propenſity. He was born in a State of *conſummate Rectitude*; and from the firſt Moment of his exiſting in Fleſh, was adorned with all the Beauties of Holineſs. HOLINESS TO THE LORD was inſcribed, not on the *Mitre*, but on the *Heart*, and interwoven with the very Nature of our great HIGH-PRIEST. Therefore He is ſtyled by the Angelic Harbinger of his Birth, THAT HOLY THING *.—In the Prophecy of *Zechariah*, the Dignity of our REDEEMER's Perſon, and the Perfection of his Obedience, are diſplayed by the Similitude of a *Stone* †, decorated with the moſt exquiſite

* *Luke* i. 35.—Which is ſpoken, in *Contradiſtinction* to the State of all other Births; and implies the *univerſal* Prevalence of original Defilement, this *one* Inſtance only excepted. For, if other Infants were holy at their firſt Formation, and made after the Image of GOD, this Remark had been trivial and impertinent, if not droll and burleſque; like ſaying with great Solemnity, "The "Child ſhall have a Mouth and a Head; aye, and Eyes "in the one, and Lips to the other."—Far be it from Us, to aſcribe Superfluity of Speech, or Weakneſs of Sentiment, to the Angels of Light. No; here was *dignus Vindice Nodus*. An unparalleled and miraculous Event. A clean Thing iſſuing from an Unclean! A Child perfectly pure and upright; though born of a Woman; ſprung from a Daughter of fallen *Adam!*

† *Zech.* iii. 9, 10. *For behold the Stone that I have laid before Joſhua; upon one Stone ſhall be ſeven Eyes; behold! I will engrave the Graving thereof, ſaith the LORD of Hoſts, and I will remove the Iniquity of that Land in one Day. In that Day, ſaith the LORD of Hoſts, ſhall ye call every Man his Neighbour under the Vine, and under the Fig-tree.*

Behold

quiſite Engraving. Wrought, not by *Bezaleel* or *Aholiab*, though divinely inſpired Artiſts, but by the Finger of JEHOVAH Himſelf; and more highly finiſhed, than it is poſſible for human Skill to equal, or human Thought to conceive.

The whole Tenour of our LORD's Conduct, was a living Exemplification of Piety and Morality, in their moſt *extenſive* Branches, and moſt *amiable* Forms. Saints of the higheſt Attainments have fallen ſhort of the Glory of GOD; have been far from reaching the exalted Standard of his Precepts. But *CHRIST* failed in no Point; *CHRIST* came ſhort in no Degree.—We formerly obſerved the

Behold the Stone; the long-expected MESSIAH; that chief Corner-ſtone, on which the Church is built, and the Hope of *Iſrael* founded.—It is *laid before Joſhua* the High-Prieſt and his Fellows; as the only Foundation, on which thoſe wiſe Maſter-builders ſhould reſt the Faith, and eſtabliſh the Salvation of Sinners.—*Upon one Stone ſhall be ſeven Eyes*; to denote the unerring Diſcernment and infinite Wiſdom of our LORD. Whereby He is capable of planning, preſiding over, and conducting all Things, relating to the unſearchable Work of Redemption.—*I will engrave the Graving thereof.* For Him hath GOD the FATHER ſealed; diſtinguiſhed Him by every Characteriſtic of the MESSIAH; adorned Him with every illuſtrious Gift; and fitted Him, in all Reſpects, for the Diſcharge of his grand Office.—*I will remove*, by his Obedience unto Death, *the Iniquity of the Land*; and that *in one Day*, not by a long Train of Victims, or by a frequent Repetition of the ſame Sacrifice, but by "his own Oblation once offered."—In Conſequence of this all-ſufficient Expiation, Peace and Tranquility ſhall take Place in the Believer's Soul. Even that Peace, which paſſeth all Underſtanding; and is repreſented, though faintly, by ſitting *under the Vine and under the Fig-tree.* Where the happy Owner and his Friends, enjoy an undiſturbed Repoſe, a refreſhing Shade, and the moſt delicious Fruit.

the great Sublimity, and vaſt Extent of the divine Law. That, before the Tribunal of GOD, nothing will paſs for Righteouſneſs, but a complete Conformity to this moſt perfect Rule. From whence appears the utter Impoſſibility of our Juſtification, on Account of any Duties performed by Ourſelves. How ſhould We rejoice then to contemplate our vicarious Righteouſneſs! That which is introduced by our condeſcending SURETY!

JESUS CHRIST, the Surety for Us inſolvent Wretches, made Himſelf ſubject to this Law. And though, in its Threatenings, the condemning Power of Sin is ſet in terrible Array; though, in its Commands, the very Perfection of Obedience is moſt peremptorily inſiſted on; He aſked no Mitigation of its Severity, nor any Abatement of its Demands. "Lo I come, ſaid He, to pay the uttermoſt Farthing of the Debt, to do every Jot "and Tittle of the Duty." That ſo his Righteouſneſs, ariſing to View, from the ſevereſt Trial, by the exacteſt Rule, might, like Gold from the Furnace, ſhine with all poſſible Luſtre.

His Righteouſneſs flowed from thoſe beſt of Principles, ſupreme Love to GOD, and unfeigned Affection to Men. Beginning at theſe two Sources, let Us trace our LORD's Obedience, through ſome little Part of its illuſtrious Progreſs.—If, as We proceed, We are enabled to *ſee that Juſt One*, perhaps, We ſhall no longer be offended or ſurpriſed, at the firſt and great Command of the Goſpel. *This is his Commandment*, which has the Precedence to all others, *that We ſhould believe on the Name of his Son JESUS CHRIST* *. Not, that

* 1 John iii. 23.

that We ſhould *do* any Thing to obtain Life, but that We ſhould *believe* on his beloved SON; and live by what HE, the bleſſed Subſtitute for Sinners, has done.

His Delight in GOD was conſpicuous, even from his *early* Years. The ſacred Solemnities of the Sanctuary, were more engaging to his youthful Mind, than all the Entertainments of a Feſtival.—When He entered upon his Miniſtry, *whole Nights* were not too long for his copious Devotions. The lonely Retirements of the Deſart, as affording Opportunity for undiſturbed Communion with GOD, were more deſirable to *CHRIST*, than the Applauſes of an admiring World.

So ceaſeleſs and tranſcendent was his Love to GOD, that He never ſought any ſeparate Pleaſure of his own; but always did thoſe Things, which were pleaſing in his FATHER's Sight. *Wiſt ye not, that I muſt be about my FATHER's Buſineſs?* was the Rule of his Childhood, and the leading Maxim of his whole Life. In doing this, He took unſpeakable Satisfaction: in doing this, He was abſolutely indefatigable. *It was his Meat and Drink*, refreſhing as the richeſt Food, delightful as royal Dainties, *to finiſh the Work that was given Him to do* *.

How wakeful and jealous was his Concern for the divine Honour! I hear the vileſt Reproaches caſt upon his own Character: I ſee the moſt horrid Indignities offered to his own Perſon. Yet no reſentful Emotion reddens in his Cheek; not one angry Syllable ſtarts from his Mouth. But when mercenary Wretches prophane the Temple, and

* John iv. 34.

turn *the Houſe of Prayer into a Den of Thieves*; then his generous Boſom throbs with Zeal; then He makes his Tongue like a ſharp Sword; and having firſt ſeverely rebuked, afterwards reſolutely expels, the ſacrilegious Intruders.—Indeed, his Zeal for the Houſe of the LORD and for the Purity of his Ordinances, is repreſented by the evangelical Hiſtorian, as *eating Him up* *. Like a heavenly Flame, glowing in his Breaſt, it ſometimes fired Him with a graceful Indignation; ſometimes melted Him into godly Sorrow; always broke forth and exerted itſelf in a Variety of vigorous Efforts; till it even conſumed his vital Spirits.

So active and unremitted was the Obedience of the bleſſed *JESUS*, that the Sun did not enter upon his Morning Race with a more conſtant Aſſiduity, nor diſpatch his daily Circuit with greater Expedition. And ſure I am, that radiant Luminary never diſpenſed Beams, half ſo bright, or a thouſandth Part ſo beneficial.—Short was his Span, but how grand and extenſive were his Services. So *grand*, that they bring more Glory to GOD, than all the Adminiſtrations of Providence, and all the Phænomena of Nature. So *extenſive*, that they ſpread, in their gracious Efficacy, to the Ends of the Earth, and to the cloſing Period of Time. Nay, they will diffuſe their bleſſed Influence even to the celeſtial World, and have no other Limits of their Duration than the Ages of Eternity.

Who can declare the *Charity* of *JESUS CHRIST?* It was ardent: it was unintermitted: it was unbounded. Though always ſerene and ſerious, He was never ſullenly grave. His Converſation

* John ii. 17.

ſation was Affability itſelf, and the Law of Kindneſs dwelt on his Lips. What fretted and chagrined the Diſciples, made not the leaſt ruffling Impreſſion on their LORD. The rude and troubleſome Behaviour of Some, the weak and impertinent Talk of Others, ſerved only to diſplay the unalterable Mildneſs of his Temper.

Nothing could imbitter his Spirit. Even the Wicked and Unthankful were Partakers, ample Partakers of his Benevolence. Who ever applied to Him in vain? When did He diſmiſs any needy Petitioner, without the deſired Bleſſing? What heavy Burden did He not unlooſe? What afflictive Evil did He not remove? *He* even *took their Infirmities, and bare their Sickneſſes* *. In all their Afflictions He was afflicted. His tender ſympathizing Heart felt, as it were, the Miſeries of Others; and was as ready to ſuccour them, as if the Complaints and Sorrows had been his own.

He not only relieved, when his Aid was implored, but prevented the Expectations of the Diſtreſſed. *He went about doing Good* †; ſeeking the Afflicted, and offering his Aſſiſtance. With great Fatigue ‡, He traveled to remote Cities; with no leſs

* Matt. viii. 17. † Acts x. 38.

‡ *JESUS, being* weary *with his Journey,* καθιζεσθαι ουτως. John iv. 6.—ουτως is thus explained by a *Greek* Commentator, απλως, και ως ουχι. Our LORD ſat down, *without Ceremony* and *without Complaint*, even on the rough unfurniſhed Place: contented to uſe it, juſt as He found it; neither deſiring a ſofter Seat, nor wiſhing for any better Accommodation.—I rather think, the Adverb refers to the preceding Adjective κακοπαθων, which ſignifies a State of very great Fatigue; weakening a Perſon to ſuch a Degree, that He can hardly walk with *ſteady*

leſs Condeſcenſion, He viſited the meaneſt Villages. That All might have the Honour, and All the Benefit, of his healing Preſence and heavenly Inſtructions.

He gave Sight *, and all the agreeable Scenes of Nature, to the Blind; Health, and all the choice Comforts of Life, to the Diſeaſed. He expelled malevolent raging Dæmons; and reſtored, what is more precious than the Light of the Body, or the Vigour of Conſtitution, the calm Poſſeſſion of the intellectual Faculties.—What *greatly ſurpaſſed* all the preceding Bleſſings, He delivered the wretched Soul from the Dominion of Darkneſs, and from the Tyranny of Sin. He made his Followers Partakers of a divine Nature, and prepared them for a State of never-ending Bliſs.

Such priceleſs Treaſures of Wiſdom and Beneficence flowed from his Tongue, and were poured from his Hands!—How different theſe Triumphs of Mercy, from the Trophies erected, by wild Ambition, in the bloody Field! If *Heathens* celebrated thoſe mighty Butchers, who made Cities their Slaughter-houſe; made half the Globe their Shambles;

Steps, or even ſit in an *upright* Attitude. The ſacred Hiſtorian ſeems to mean, that our LORD ſat in ſuch a Poſture, as beſpoke the Laſſitude of his Body; declared the Failure of his Spirits; and *ſhewed* Him to be almoſt ſpent, with the Heat of the Day, and the Toil of Traveling. Which Circumſtance gives a moſt beautiful *Heightning* to his Charity and Zeal, ſo generouſly and ſo ſucceſsfully exerted in the following Conference.

* Εχαριζατο το βλεπειν, is the delicate and noble Expreſſion of the Evangeliſt, *Luke* vii. 21. *He made them a Preſent of Sight.* Silver and Gold had He none. But theſe were his Gifts; ſuch were his Alms. God-like Beneficence indeed!

bles; and meaſured their Merit, by the Devaſtations they ſpread; how ſhould *Chriſtians* admire this heavenly BENEFACTOR, who roſe upon a wretched World, with Healing under his Wings! Who diſtributed, far and near, the unſpeakably rich Gifts of Knowledge and Holineſs, of temporal Happineſs and eternal Joy!

Nor were theſe righteous Acts his ſtrange Work, but his *repeated*, his *hourly*, his almoſt *inceſſant* Employ. Sometimes, We hear him preaching in the Temple, or publiſhing his glad Tidings in the Synagogues. Sometimes, We ſee Him ſurrounded with liſtening Crouds, in a private Houſe; or bringing forth the good Things of his Goſpel on the Deck of a Ship. At other Times, He takes a Mountain for his Pulpit; the Heavens are his Sounding-board; and *all that have Ears to hear*, are invited to be his Audience.—"He preached Holineſs, ſays an in-"genious Writer, to Mens Eyes no leſs than their "Ears." Yes; his whole Life was a continual Lecture of the ſublimeſt Piety, of the moſt refined Morality, of Virtue truly divine. And which is to Us the crowning Circumſtance, all this was not barely for our *Imitation*, but for our *Juſtification* alſo *. To be a lovely and inviting Model for the firſt;

* The Reader, I hope, will conſtantly advert to this Remark. Otherwiſe, He will loſe, even in the Evangeliſts themſelves, what is moſt evangelical. That our LORD's Life was exemplary; was ſublimely perfect; and a Pattern for our Imitation; all this is ſtrictly true. But in all this, there is nothing of genuine *Goſpel*. Here are no *Glad-tidings* for an impotent and ruined Creature. Only a conſummate Copy for a withered Hand to tranſcribe.

Whereas, if We believe, that in all this *CHRIST* acted as our Surety and Repreſentative: that by all this,

firſt; to be a ſure and immoveable Ground for the laſt.

Does He lay aſide his ſolemn Office? It is only to carry on the ſame generous Deſign in a more condeſcending and *familiar* Manner. If He meets with the *Phariſees*, He diſcovers their Errors, and reproves their Vices; He confutes their Objections, and (in caſe they are not abſolutely inacceſſible to wiſe Counſel) rectifies their Miſtakes. If He vouchſafes to be preſent at a Feaſt, He furniſhes the richeſt, incomparably the richeſt Part of the Treat. *Honey and Milk are under his Tongue* *. He inculcates Lowlineſs of Mind on the vain †; He recommends diſintereſted Charity to the Selfiſh ‡; and promiſes Pardon to the weeping Penitent ‖.—Is He retired from *other* Company, and attended only by his own Family? His Converſation is a Sermon. Whether He ſit in the inner Chamber, or travel on the public Road, or walk through the Corn-fields, He is ſtill proſecuting his great Work; training up his Diſciples for their ſacred Function; and revealing to them thoſe Oracles of Heaven, which they may communicate to remote Nations, and tranſmit to diſtant Ages.—Is He retired from *all* Company? Even

He wrought a Righteouſneſs, which, in the Judgment and Conſtruction of the Law, is really ours: that GOD imputes this Righteouſneſs to Us, and will deal with Us according to its Deſert: when We believe this, We ſee the Light of the glorious Goſpel, and enter into the unſearchable Riches of *CHRIST*. This gives an additional Beauty, an exquiſite and inexpreſſible Charm to all the Actions and Virtues, all the Trials and Sufferings of our bleſſed Maſter. He was holy and righteous, not as a private Perſon, not for Himſelf alone, but for Us Sinners, and our Juſtification. *Amen! Hallelujah!*

* Cant. iv. 11. † Luke xiv. 8. ‡ Luke xiv. 12. ‖ Luke vii. 48.

Even then He does not diſcontinue his Labours of Love, but adds the fervent Interceſſions of the Night, to the charitable Toils of the Day. When all but Himſelf, lay ſunk in ſoft Repoſe, this ADVOCATE for a guilty World, was engaged in an Exerciſe of Benevolence; which, though ſecret and unobſerved as the falling Dews, was far more beneficial to our beſt Intereſts, than thoſe pearly Drops to the languiſhing Herbs.

Unparalleled Benignity! He *forgot* his daily Food, *neglected* his neceſſary Reſt, to ſpend and be ſpent for the Salvation of Mankind. Neither the Hardſhips of continual Self-denial, nor the Calumnies of envenomed Tongues, could divert Him from purſuing this favourite Buſineſs.—He ſought none of your Honours, coveted none of your Rewards, O ye Children of Men! What *He* ſought, what *He* coveted, was, to wear out his Life in your Service, and lay it down for your Ranſom. This was all his Deſire, and this indeed He deſired earneſtly: —He longed (beneficent, bleſſed BEING!) He longed for the fatal Hour. He ſeverely rebuked one of his Diſciples, who would have diſſuaded Him from going as a Voluntier to the Croſs. He was even *ſtraitened* *, under a Kind of holy Uneaſineſs,

* *Luke* xii. 50. The original Word Συνεχομαι ſeems to expreſs the Condition of a Perſon, wedged in, on every Side, by a tumultuous Throng of People. His Hands are hampered, and his Body is confined in a moving Priſon: He pants for Breath, and is almoſt ſtifled in the Crowd.—How muſt ſuch a One long to be *diſengaged* from theſe *very uneaſy* Circumſtances! With equal Ardour did our moſt beneficent LORD deſire thoſe Sufferings, which were to overwhelm Him with Diſtreſs, but exalt *Us* to Happineſs; were to bathe his

ness, till the dreadful Work was accomplished; till He was *baptised with the Baptism of his Sufferings*, bathed in Blood, and plunged in Death.

By this most meritorious Obedience and Death, what did He not *deserve?* What did He not *procure?* He procured those inestimable Blessings, the Pardon of Sin, and Reconciliation with GOD. Procured them (O! Love unmerited and unmeasurable!) for Prodigals, for Traitors, for Rebels. —To this it is owing, that We, who were Enemies against GOD, may call the KING of Heaven our Father; may have free Access to Him in all our Difficulties; and may hope to reign with Him in everlasting Glory.

Was ever Goodness like this Goodness *? Were ever Blessings comparable to these Blessings? or purchased

Limbs in Blood, but cleanse our Souls from Sin.—Οι οχλοι, says the same Historian, Συνεχουσι σε και αποθλιβουσι, *Luke* viii. 45.

* *Codrus*, it is true, devoted Himself to Death for the *Athenians*; and *Curtius* threw Himself into the yawning Gulf, for the Preservation of the *Romans*.—But these died, being *mere* Creatures, and *guilty* Creatures: whereas, the dying *JESUS* was perfectly innocent, and supremely glorious; "was very GOD, of very GOD." —These died, only a *little before* their Time; they paid a Debt, for which the inevitable Law of Mortality would soon have distrained. But *CHRIST* died, though He had Life in Himself; He surrendred, what was wholly his own; and what None could have taken from Him, had He not voluntarily resigned it.—These died for their valuable *Friends*, for their affectionate *Relations*, for their native *Country*: but *CHRIST* died for Slaves, for Enemies, for the Ungodly.—They died an *honourable* Death: but *CHRIST* submitted to the most *ignominious* Execution; *CHRIST* expired under the Imputation of *horrid* Crimes; *CHRIST* bled and died in the Form of an *execrable*

chased with such a Price?—Hide, hide your diminished Heads, ye little transitory Donations of Silver and Gold. The Riches of a thousand Mines, bestowed to feed the Hungry and clothe the Naked, are the most contemptible Trifles, if mentioned with the Charity of this *teaching*, the *healing*, the *bleeding* JESUS. Kingdoms given away in Alms, if viewed with this infinitely noble Beneficence, would make but a mean Figure, as a Spark from the Summer-hearth, under the potent and boundless Blaze of Noon.—This is indeed *Love that passeth Knowledge* *.

Amidst all these Miracles of Magnificence and of Love (any one of which would have intitled Him to universal Admiration, and everlasting Honour) how *humble* was our SAVIOUR! He ascribes nothing to Himself. His FATHER has the Glory of all his marvelous Acts. O Humility.—Virtue dear to the most High GOD, and peculiarly

notable Malefactor.—In all these Instances, as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so is *CHRIST*'s Love greater than their Love; his *Philanthropy* superior to their *Patriotism*.

* *Eph.* iii. 19. This Expression, as also the *principal* Circumstance of Superiority hinted in the preceding Note, are founded on the *Divinity* of our LORD. And indeed the Expression is scarce justifiable, the Assertion is hardly true, upon any other Supposition. A Creature dying for a Creature, is, though great, yet not *incomprehensible* Goodness. But, when We view the Sufferings of *CHRIST*, and the Blessings of Redemption surrounded with all the Splendor of the DEITY; they dazzle our Understanding, and fill Us with holy Astonishment. They appear to be the Effects of a Love, never to be spoke of but in the Language of *Wonder*, never to be thought of but with an Extasy of *Delight*.

culiarly amiable in Men—never didſt Thou appear in ſo charming a Dreſs, or ſo ſtriking a Light.

At his Birth, not accommodated with an imperial Palace, or a Bed of *State*; but lodged in a Stable, and laid in a Manger.—As He advanced in Years, not attended with a *royal* Equipage, or ſupplied from a *royal* Revenue; but labouring with his own Hands, and earning his Bread by the Sweat of his Brow.—When He entered upon his miniſterial Office, not the leaſt oſtentatious *Parade* appeared, in the Performance of all his wonderful Works. His Manner was as modeſt, as his Power was miraculous. So far, ſo very far from affecting the Acclamations of the Populace, that He often impoſed Silence on thoſe unſpeakably indebted Lips, which were eager to overflow with Praiſe, and would fain have been the Trumpets of his Fame.

Though a Voice from Heaven proclaimed Him, The BELOVED of his Almighty FATHER; He diſdained not to own the ignoble Character of the *Carpenter*'s Son *. Though PRINCE of the Kings of the Earth, He condeſcended to waſh the Feet of mean Fiſhermen, and to be *in this World, as One that ſerveth* †. Though PROPRIETOR of the Univerſe, and LORD of all, He was content to be more deſtitute than the Fowls of the Air, or the Foxes of the Deſart ‡: more deſtitute (aſtoniſhing Abaſement!) than the moſt *inſignificant* and moſt *hated* Animals.

Grandeur, We find, is apt to beget Expectations of ſuperior Regard. Conſequently, gives a keener Edge to every Affront, and renders the Mind more tenderly ſenſible of every Diſreſpect. But our LORD's

* Matt. xiii. 55. † Luke xxii. 27. ‡ Matt. viii. 20.

LORD's *Meekneſs* was as great as his Dignity; and that, through a Series of ſuch *unſufferable* Provocations, as were equaled by nothing, but the tranſcendent Perfections of his Perſon, and the Sweetneſs of his forgiving Grace.

When ridiculed and affronted, He calmly bore, and kindly overlooked the Inſult.—When contradicted by *petulant* and *preſumptuous* Sinners, He endured, with the utmoſt Serenity of Temper, their unreaſonable Cavils, and their obſtinate Perverſeneſs.—When his Invitations, his moſt endearing Invitations, were ungratefully and ſtubbornly rejected; inſtead of remitting, He renewed them; and, with ſtill warmer Affection, importuned his Hearers, not to forego *their own* Felicity.—When all the winning Arts of Perſuaſion were ineffectual, He added his Tears to his ſlighted Intreaties; and lamented as a Brother, when ſcornfully repulſed as a Teacher.

When his bloody Sweat tinged the Stones; when his bitter Cries pierced the Clouds, and were enough to awaken the very Rocks into Compaſſion; his Diſciples ſlept; ſtupidly and repeatedly ſlept. Did their divine but ſlighted MASTER reſent the Unkindneſs? Did he refuſe to admit an Excuſe for their Diſobedience and Neglect? Yea, He made their Excuſe; and that the moſt tender and gracious imaginable; *The Spirit is willing, but the Fleſh is weak* *. Admirable, matchleſs Candour!—When *his Enemies* had nailed Him to the Croſs, as the baſeſt Slave, and moſt flagitious Malefactor; when they were glutting their Malice, with his Sorrows, his Torments, and his Blood; nay, when they

* Matt. xxvi. 41.

they spared not to insult and revile Him, even in his last expiring Agonies; far, very far from being exasperated, this HERO of Heaven repaid all their Contempt and Barbarity, with the most fervent Supplications in their Behalf. *FATHER, forgive them,* was his Prayer: *for, they know not what they do* *, was his Plea. Divine, adorable Compassion!

Nor was his *Resignation* less exemplary than his Meekness. He went out to meet Afflictions, when they came in his FATHER's Name, and commissioned from his FATHER's Hand. He gave, without the least Reluctance, his Back to the Smiters †, and hid not his Face from Shame and Spitting. Though his Soul, his very Soul was penetrated with the keenest Sensations of Anguish; yet, no impatient Thought discomposed his Mind, no murmuring Word forced its Way from his Lips. *FATHER, not my Will, but thine be done* ‡, was his Language; when the Sorrows of Death compassed Him, and Pains, inexpressibly severer than the Pangs of Dissolution, came upon Him. *When they gaped upon Him with their Mouth, and smote Him upon the Cheek reproachfully. When his Face was foul with spitting, and on his Eye-lids was the Shadow of Death. When GOD delivered Him to the Ungodly, and turned Him over into the Hands of the Wicked. Yea, when the*

* Luke xxiii. 34.

† The Punishment of the *Scourge*, was so dreadful a Part of our LORD's Sufferings, that it is once and again foretold, by the Prophet *Isaiah*. *I gave my Back to the Smiters*, l. 6. *With his Stripes We are healed*, liii. 5. *Horace*, who knew it perfectly well, and by whose Countrymen it was inflicted, styles it *The horrible Scourge*; *Horribili sectere Flagello*.

‡ Luke xxii. 42.

*the ALMIGHTY set Him for the Mark of his Arrows, and brake Him with Breach upon Breach. When the Weapons of his Wrath left his very Reins asunder, and poured his Gall upon the Earth.** Amidst all this Distress, though exquisite and inconceivable, He sinned not by the least irregular Perturbation; but bowed his submissive Head, and kissed the divine Rod, and blessed his very Murderers.

A famous Poet has celebrated *The Man of Ross*: another ingenious Pen has celebrated *The Man of Bath*: O! that *We* may admire, extol, and magnify *The MAN of Nazareth!* O! that every Tongue may speak of his Honour, till Heaven and Earth resound with his Praise.—Here, Ye Writers of Genius, here is a Theme worthy of your finest Perceptions, and more than equal to your most enlarged Capacities. Let Imagination spread her boldest Wing; let Description select her brightest Colours; let Eloquence lavish all her Stores: it will be impossible to exceed, while *The MAN of Nazareth* is the Subject of your Songs. In Him dwells all the Fulness of Perfection. In Him, the whole Choir of *active* and *passive* Virtues abound and shine; abound with the richest Variety, and shine with the highest Lustre. Infinitely surpassing that curious Assemblage of costly Gems, which studded

* These tragical Images are borrowed from the Book of *Job*, who was an eminent Type of a suffering SAVIOUR. Though they are the very Eloquence of Woe, they do not exaggerate, they cannot express, that unknown Anguish; which wrung a bloody Sweat from our divine MASTER's Body, and forced from his Lips that melancholy Exclamation—*My Soul is sorrowful—exceeding sorrowful—sorrowful even unto Death.* See *Job* xvi.

ſtudded the *Aaronic* Breaſt-plate *; and, as far as earthly Things can repreſent heavenly, typefied the Splendor and Excellency of our REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs.

In all this, He acted and He ſuffered, as GOD's *righteous Servant*, and as his People's *righteous Surety*. —By all this, He fulfilled every Jot and Tittle of the divine Law; nay, He more than fulfilled, He *magnified* it. He gave it, ſublime and extenſive as it is, *good Meaſure, preſſed down, and ſhaken together, and running over* †.—Shall You or I then ſay, or ſo much as ſuſpect, in our Hearts? "*CHRIST* "has not done enough. All this is not ſufficient "for our Juſtification, unleſs We complete it with "ſomething of our own?"

He defied the moſt vigilant of his Enemies to convince him of Sin or Defect.—A far more ſagacious Adverſary than the Scribes and Phariſees, could detect no Blemiſh, no Error, in our *LORD JESUS, The Prince of this World*, that infernal Tyrant, who had deceived and enſlaved all the Nations of the Earth, *came and found nothing in Him* ‡; not the leaſt Corruption in his Nature, nor the leaſt Failure in his Obedience.—Nay; that Accuſer of the Brethren, notwithſtanding all his Malignity, could not but acknowledge the unſpotted Sanctity of our LORD; *I know Thee, who Thou art, the Holy One of GOD.*

He hath done all Things well; was, not barely the Voice of his Diſciples, but the general Acclamation of the People. Or, the Words may be rendered,

* Exod. xxviii. 17, 18, 19, 20. † Luke vi. 38.
‡ John xiv. 30.

dered, He hath done all Things *finely* and *gracefully* * ; with every Circumſtance, that conſtitutes the Propriety and Dignity, the Utility and Beauty of Action. Has He not then done enough, to procure the divine Good-will, even for the guilteſt of Mankind?

I have glorified Thee on Earth †, was his own Profeſſion before the moſt High GOD. I have glorified Thee, in all that I acted, in all that I uttered, in all that I ſuffered. I have diſplayed the Beauties of thy Holineſs, the Riches of thy Grace, and the Honour of *all* thy Attributes. So that all thy amiable, thy majeſtic, thy adorable Perfections, are now ſeen in the cleareſt Mirror, and in the brighteſt Light ‡.

GOD

* *Mark* vii. 37. Καλως. In this Inſtance, and throughout all the Goſpel, it is very obſervable; that the Praiſe, which our LORD receives, comes not from the Pen of the Hiſtorian, nor from the Mouth of his Friends, but from the Lips of *Strangers* or *Enemies*—from the Officers, ſent to apprehend Him—from the Judge, appointed to examine Him—from the Centurion, who preſided at his Execution—and from thoſe apoſtate Spirits, whoſe Dominion He came to deſtroy. A Circumſtance, which gives incomparable *Weight* to this Teſtimony, and incomparable *Luſtre* to *CHRIST*'s Character. It preſents Us likewiſe with a moſt delicate Peculiarity, which We muſt not expect to find in any other biographical Writers.

† John xvii. 4.

‡ Therefore *CHRIST* is called απαυγασμα της δοξης, *Heb.* i. 3. In other Objects, We have only ſome obſcure Footſteps, or dim Traces, of one or two divine Perfections; here We have the *whole Glory* of the GODHEAD. Nay, here We have *the very Brightneſs* of the FATHER's Glory; or, all the uncreated Excellencies beam forth with *adequate*, that is, with ineffable and infinite Splendor.

GOD alſo, who is the ſupreme Standard and unerring Judge of Excellency, bore his Teſtimony to our bleſſed MEDIATOR. He ſpoke it once, yea twice, and with a Voice from Heaven.—In the Conſtitution of the material World, when it came from the CREATOR's Hand, Omniſcience itſelf could diſcern no Flaw. Neither could Juſtice itſelf, upon the ſtricteſt Enquiry, diſcover any Failure in the Obedience of our SURETY. As therefore it was ſaid, concerning the Works of Creation, *They are all very good* *; So was it ſaid, and by the ſame Almighty MAJESTY, concerning the SAVIOUR of Sinners, *In Him I am well pleaſed* †.

This, for ought I know, is the *capital* Sentence in the Book of GOD. As no Truth is of greater or of equal Importance, ſo none was ever confirmed by Witneſſes ſo unexceptionable, and diſtinguiſhed with Circumſtances ſo auguſt.—Let Us, for a Moment, examine the Circumſtances. They are pertinent to our Subject. They will ſtrike Us with Wonder; and, I hope, fill Us with Comfort.—You, *Theron*, are an Admirer of ſublime Sentiments, and grand Scenery. Here You will find both diſplayed in their utmoſt Perfection.

Lo! the Heavens were opened unto Him, and He ſaw the SPIRIT of GOD, deſcending like a Dove, and lighting upon Him. And lo! a Voice from Heaven, ſaying; This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.—The Word *Lo*, is twice uſed, in this ſhort Narrative. To engage and fix our Attention, as on a Fact deeply to be regarded, accompanied with Words ever to be remembered.—*The Heavens*

* Gen. i. 31. † Matt. iii. 17.

Heavens were opened. Once the great and wide Sea was divided, and the Foundations of the World were diſcovered. Now, the incomparably wider Expanſe of the Skies is rent aſunder, and the Realms of Glory are diſcloſed to View.—And are the cryſtal Gates unfolded? Do the everlaſting Doors lift up their Heads? What then, or Whom may We expect to ſee?

Shall We ſee Angels and Arch-angels coming down, before *JESUS* of *Nazareth*, to pay Him Homage, and do Him Service? With this Retinue He will, in due Time, appear. But this is far beneath the Dignity of the preſent Occaſion.—Shall We ſee *Moſes* the great Lawgiver, who converſed with GOD Face to Face, as a Man converſeth with his Friend? Shall We ſee *Elijah* the venerable Prophet, who entered the Regions of Life and Immortality, without paſſing through the Vale of Death? Theſe illuſtrious Saints will, ere long, attend on the holy Mount, and lay all their Honours at the Feet of their LORD.—But now, ONE infinitely greater than *Moſes* and *Elijah*, ONE infinitely ſuperior to all the heavenly Hoſts, even the divine SPIRIT deſcends, alights, and abides upon *JESUS*. To dignify, beyond Compare, his Perſon; and give ineſtimable Merit to all his Actions.

This, though great and marvelous, is not the Whole of the magnificent Atteſtation. A Voice, not from the utmoſt Parts of the Earth, but a Voice from the Heaven of Heavens is heard. That Voice, which ſpoke on *Sinai*, and the Mountains trembled; that Voice, which ſpoke at the Beginning, and the World was made; that Voice ſpeaks at our

SAVIOUR's Baptism.—And what is the Purport of the Speech? We have Reason to listen most attentively. Our All depends upon the Verdict. If any Iniquity, or any Miscarriage, be chargeable on this our Surety, We are undone irrecoverably. That Voice, after a general Survey of Mankind, once declared; *There is None righteous, no, not One.* But, to our inexpressible Consolation it proclaims concerning *JESUS CHRIST*, THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED.

HE, who dwells in Light inaccessible, declares concerning *CHRIST*; This is, not my Creature, but *My Son.* Possessed of the same divine Nature, and of all my incommunicable Attributes.—He is my *beloved* Son. Who lay in my Bosom from Eternity, and is the one adequate Object of my infinite Affection. The highest Angels are too low; fallen Man is too mean; and *JESUS* alone is my Beloved.—In Him *I am pleased*; in Him I am *well pleased.* He is the Center of my Approbation. On Him all my Complacency rests. And all other Beings find Favour in my Sight, only as they are interested in Him, or stand related to Him.

After hearing this *Voice from the excellent Glory*, can there be any Cause to wonder, can We have any Ground to complain, that there is no other Recommendation to the supreme MAJESTY, than the Person and Righteousness of *CHRIST.* No Words, no Works, no Characters, but those which have been stamped with the Broad-seal of Heaven, as truly divine; and are the one grand Object of GOD's everlasting Good-will and ineffable Delight?

You took Notice, and very juſtly, how much the Productions of Nature *exceed* and *eclipſe* the Attempts of Art. We are pleaſed with the correct and graceful Performances of the Painter. But do they equal the native Bluſh of the Roſe, or the artleſs Glow of a Pea-bloſſom? We are charmed with a fine Piece of Sculpture or Enameling. But is either of them fit to be compared with the natural Poliſh, of a thouſand Shells which are formed in the Ocean, or of a thouſand Seeds which ſpring from the Earth? We admire the Virtues of the antient Saints; Men "that were honoured in "their Generation, and the Glory of their "Times *." We admire the Meekneſs of *Moſes*, and the Magnanimity of *Elijah*; the exalted Piety of *Iſaiah*, and the enlarged Wiſdom of *Daniel*; the active Spirit of *Joſhua*, and the paſſive Graces of *Jeremiah*. But what Proportion, put them all together—what Proportion do they all bear to HIS Obedience, *who is gone into Heaven, Angels and Authorities and Powers being made ſubject unto Him* †? Who is called the HOLY ONE *and the JUST* ‡; not only by way of Emphaſis, but by way of *Excluſion*. Becauſe, no Perſon is worthy of the Character, no Duties deſerve to be mentioned, when *CHRIST* and *his* Righteouſneſs—*his only* perfect Righteouſneſs—are under Conſideration.

If We talk of Merit, what *Merit* muſt there be in ſuch immaculate Sanctity of Soul, and ſuch exemplary Integrity of Conduct; ſuch fervent Zeal for GOD, and ſuch compaſſionate Good-will to Man; ſuch conſummate Worthineſs, and extenſive Uſefulneſs? Such as were utterly unknown before;

* Eccluſ. xliv. 7. † 1 Pet. iii. 22. ‡ Acts iii. 14.

have been abſolutely unequaled ſince; and never will, nor can be paralleled, throughout all Ages!—O my *Theron!* What is the *Drop* of a Bucket to the unfathomable Waves of the Ocean? What is a *Grain* of Sand to the unmeaſurable Dimenſions of the Univerſe? What is an Hour or a *Moment* to the endleſs Revolutions of Eternity? Such are all human Endowments, and all human Attainments, compared with HIS Righteouſneſs, who is *fairer than the Children of Men* *; *the chiefeſt among ten thouſand* †; *and who received not the SPIRIT by Meaſure* ‡.

And is this Righteouſneſs deſigned for *Us?* Is this to be our Wedding-dreſs, this our beautiful Array, when We enter the Regions of Eternity? Unſpeakable Privilege!—Is this what GOD has provided to ſupply, more than ſupply our Loſs in *Adam!* Boundleſs Benignity!—Shall *We* be treated by the Judge of the World, as if We had performed all this unſinning and perfect Obedience? Well might the Prophet cry out, like One loſt in Aſtoniſhment, *How great is his Goodneſs!*—How great indeed! Since all that the *LORD JESUS did and ſuffered*, was done and ſuffered, for Us Men and our Salvation. *Is imputed unto Us for Righteouſneſs* ‖; and is the Cauſe, the ſole but infinitely ſufficient Cauſe, of our Juſtification.

Is not your Heart enamoured, my dear *Theron*, with a View of this incomprehenſibly rich Grace? What ſo excellent, what ſo comfortable, what ſo deſirable,

* Pſal. xlv. 2. † Cantic. v. 10. ‡ John iii. 34.
‖ The Words in the *Italic* Character, are a Teſtimony from the celebrated Mr. HOOKER. *Eccleſ. Pol.* B. V.

desirable, as this Gift of a SAVIOUR's Righteousness? Though delineated by this *feeble* Pen, methinks, it has Dignity and Glory enough, to captivate our Hearts and fire our Affections: fire them with ardent and inextinguishable Desires after a personal Interest and Propriety in it.—O! may the Eternal SPIRIT reveal our REDEEMER's Righteousness, in all its heavenly Beauty and divine Lustre! Then, I am persuaded, We shall esteem it above *every Thing*; We shall regard it as the *One Thing* needful; We shall count *all Things* in comparison of it, worthless as the Chaff, and empty as the Wind.

To a fallen and immortal Soul, every Thing else is empty as the Wind. But here Sinners may *suck, and be satisfied with this Breast of Consolation:* yea, Millions and Thousands of Millions may *milk out, and be delighted with the Abundance of its Glory* *.—Here we shall find the Doctrine of *Supererogation*, no longer a Chimera, but a delightful Reality. Here indeed is an immense Surplusage, an inexhaustible Fund of Merit †, sufficient to enrich a whole

* *Isai.* lxvi. 11. This Comparison, I think, is peculiarly apposite and significant. The Breasts are prepared for the Infant, before He sees the Light. The delicious Nourishment which they afford, is not, in any Degree, of his own providing. He has no other Agency in the Case, than to imbibe the Liquor, and enjoy the Refreshment. Thus it is with regard to Sinners, and that Righteousness of their SAVIOUR, which procures their Pardon and Acceptance; from whence proceeds their Sanctification, and every spiritual Blessing.

† Yet here is no *rich Fund* (as a learned Writer asserts) no Fund at all, *for the Pope's Treasury of meritorious supererogating Actions:* unless *CHRIST* and the *Pope* are to

whole World of indigent and miſerable Creatures, ſufficient to make their Cup run over with a ſuper-abundant Fulneſs of Peace and Joy, ſo long as Time ſhall laſt, and when Time ſhall be no more. For, to uſe the Apoſtle's weighty Argument, *If by one Man's Offence, Death reigned by one; much more they which receive Abundance of Grace, and of the Gift of Righteouſneſs, ſhall reign in Life by one, JESUS CHRIST* *. Is it reaſonable, that We ſhould aſcribe more Power to *Adam*, a mere Man, in making Us Sinners; than to *CHRIST*, the GOD-Man, in making Us righteous? No verily. If *one* Offence, committed by one Man, made all his Poſterity chargeable with Guilt, and liable to Death, MUCH MORE ſhall the *manifold* Inſtances of our *Divine* REDEEMER's Obedience, abſolve all his People from Condemnation and Puniſhment, and intitle them to the Honours and Joys of Immortality.

Think not, that what I have written, is the Language of Rant. It is a Paraphraſe, though, I muſt confeſs, but a ſcanty Paraphraſe, on *David*'s Practice and *David*'s Faith. *My Mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy Righteouſneſs and thy Salvation all the Day* †, *for I know*

be placed upon the ſame Footing; unleſs the ineffably excellent Actions of JEHOVAH our Righteouſneſs, and the miſerably defective Duties of a Man like Ourſelves, are to be deemed equally valuable.—Since this will hardly be admitted by *Proteſtants*; I believe, *Aſpaſio* may ſafely call the Obedience of *CHRIST*, *The true Supererogation*; as Mr. *Ambroſe* has called the Blood of *CHRIST*, *The true Purgatory*.

* Rom. v. 17.

† *Pſal.* lxxi. 15. I cannot but obſerve, that *Righteouſneſs* and *Salvation* are frequently connected, by the Author

know not the Numbers thereof. The ſuper-eminent Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, and the great Salvation obtained thereby, He declares, ſhall be the choſen, the principal Subject of his Diſcourſe. Not on a Sabbath only, but on *every Day* of the Week,

Author of the *Pſalms*, and by the Prophet *Iſaiah*. In order to intimate, that the one is founded on the other; the latter derives its Origin from the former; there can be no Salvation without a Righteouſneſs, a real, proper, *Law-fulfilling* Righteouſneſs.—At the ſame Time, I am ſenſible, that the Word Righteouſneſs *may* ſignify GOD's Goodneſs in making, and Faithfulneſs in performing, his Promiſes unto *David*. Salvation *may* likewiſe denote the Delivery of that afflicted Hero from all his Perſecutors, and his Eſtabliſhment on the Throne of *Iſrael*.

But if We ſhould confine the Senſe within theſe narrow Limits, how *comfortleſs* the Favour even to *David* Himſelf, conſidered as an immortal Being! How much more *inſignificant* to Us and others, on whom the Ends of the World are come! Therefore, how *unworthy* of that infinite GOD, who is the Father of the Spirits of all Fleſh; who ſees, at one View, whatever is, or has been, or ſhall exiſt; who, when He ſpeaks, ſpeaks to all his Children, in every Period of Time, and in every Nation under Heaven. (See Verſe 18.) As much as a Tutor, when delivering his Lectures, addreſſes Himſelf to all his Pupils, whether they ſit at his Right-hand or his left, before Him or on every Side.

Whereas, if Righteouſneſs ſignifies the meritorious Obedience of *CHRIST*, and Salvation implies the Benefits of his Redemption, the Senſe is no longer ſhriveled, impoveriſhed, and mean; but *rich*, *auguſt*, and *magnificent*. It pours Conſolation among all People, Kindreds, and Tongues. It is worthy of that GOD, who ſeeth the Things, and regardeth the Perſons, which are not as though they were. It comports exactly with that Revelation, in which *CHRIST* is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the Beginning and the End, the Sum total.

This Note is already too long; otherwiſe I ſhould gratify my Inclination, and give a Sanction to my Sentiment, by tranſcribing *Vitringa*'s Expoſition of *Iſai.* xlv. 8.

of the Year, of his Life. Not barely at the ſtated Returns of ſolemn Devotion, but on every common Occaſion; in every ſocial Interview, *all the Day long*.—Why will He thus dwell, perpetually and invariably dwell, on this darling Theme? Becauſe, *He knew not the Numbers thereof*. It is impoſſible to meaſure the Value, or exhauſt the Fulneſs of theſe Bleſſings. The Righteouſneſs is unſpeakable, the Salvation is everlaſting. To compute the Duration of the One, Numbers fail; to deſcribe the Excellency of the other, Words are at a Loſs.

This will appear in a clearer Light, if, to the Perfection of his Obedience, We add the *Majeſty* of our SAVIOUR's *Perſon*. A proper Subject, for ſome future Letter.—In the mean Time, let me deſire my Friend, the Friend of my Boſom, to contemplate our *LORD JESUS* under that lovely and auguſt Character, GLORIOUS IN HOLINESS *. And for my Part, I will not ceaſe to pray, that a Senſe of this ſupereminently grand and precious Righteouſneſs may be written on my *Theron*'s Heart. —On thoſe living Tables, may it be like Figures cut on a Rock of ſolid Marble, or inſcribed on the Bark of a growing Tree: be *laſting* in its Duration as the former, and *ſpreading* in its Influence as the latter.—It will then be a ſure Proof, that his Name is written in the Book of Life; and it ſhall then be a moſt pleaſing Pattern for

the Affection,
the Gratitude,
and the Friendſhip, of
his ASPASIO,
P. S.

* Exod. xv. 11.

P. S. You give a moſt aſtoniſhing Account of the *Preſſure* of the Atmoſphere. Aſtoniſhing indeed! That we ſhould be continually ſurrounded, continually overwhelmed, with ſuch a Load of Air; quite dreadful to think upon! Yet not be cruſhed to death, no, nor be ſenſible of the leaſt Weight.—This, I think, may ſerve to repreſent the State of a Sinner, *unawakened* from carnal Security. Loads, more than *mountainous* Loads of Guilt, are upon his Soul, and He perceives not the Burden. For this Reaſon, He is under no Apprehenſions of the Vengeance and fiery Indignation, which He deſerves; He has no ſuperlative Eſteem for the Atonement and Merits of the REDEEMER, which alone can deliver Him from the Wrath to come. But, if once his Conſcience *feels*, what his Lips, perhaps, have often repeated; "We do earneſtly repent Us "of theſe our Miſdoings; the Remembrance "of them is grievous unto us, the Burden of "them is intolerable;" then how will He prize ſuch a Text: *The LORD laid on CHRIST the Iniquity of Us all!* How will He long for an Intereſt in the LAMB of GOD, *which taketh away the Sin of the World!* Then, that *JESUS* who has *finiſhed the Tranſgreſſion, and brought in everlaſting Righteouſneſs*, will be all his Salvation, and all his Deſire.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

I HAVE just been reading that exquisitely fine Piece of sacred History, *The Life of Joseph.* A History—illuminated with a Variety of surprising Incidents, and unexpected Revolutions—ennobled with the most heroic Instances of triumphant Virtue, both amidst the Allurements of Temptation, and under the Pressures of Affliction—animated with such tender and pathetic, such melting and alarming Touches of natural Eloquence, as every Reader must *feel*, and every true Critic will *admire.*

When I came to that remarkable Injunction, with which the generous Viceroy dismissed his Brethren; *Ye shall tell my Father of all my Glory in Egypt* * — I paused — I pondered — I was struck. Certainly, this was enjoined, not by way of Ostentation; but on Account of the Pleasure, which, He knew, it would yield the good old Patriarch.— Was it some kind prompting Angel, or the Voice of Gratitude and Devotion, that whispered in my Ear? "Should not the Children of Men likewise "tell one another of *all the Glory* †, which their RE-

* Gen. xlv. 13.

† *To see the Glory of CHRIST,* is the grand Blessing, which our LORD solicits and demands for his Disciples,

"REDEEMER poſſeſſes in Heaven and on "Earth? Will not this afford them the ſublimeſt "Pleaſure Here, and be a Source of the moſt re-"fined Satisfaction for ever and ever?"

Though I had almoſt determined to write no more, till You could make a Demand, upon the Foot of *Value received*; willingly I recede from my intended Reſolution, and obey this pleaſing Hint.—But *who can declare the noble Acts of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, or ſhew forth all his Praiſe?*—However, if I may but *liſp out* his adorable Name, and preſent my Friend with a *Glimpſe*, or a *broken* View of his divine Perfections, even this will be deſirable and delightful. Far more deſirable and delightful, than to behold *Rome* in its Magnificence, St. *Paul* in the Pulpit, or King *Solomon* on his Throne *.

Let

ciples, in his laſt ſolemn Interceſſion, *John* xvii. 24. It is that, which will complete the Bleſſedneſs of Heaven; and fill its Inhabitants with Joy unſpeakable and glorious. Surely, then, We ſhould endeavour to *anticipate*, in ſome Degree, that celeſtial Bliſs; and *habituate* our Souls to this ſacred Exerciſe, which will be our Buſineſs and our Reward to endleſs Ages.

Should the Reader deſire Aſſiſtance in this important Work, I would refer Him to a little Treatiſe of Dr. *Owen*'s, intitled, *Meditations on the Glory of CHRIST*:—'Tis little in Size, not ſo in Value. Was I to ſpeak of it, in the claſſical Style, I ſhould call it, *aureus, gemmeus, mellitus*. But I would rather ſay, it is richly repleniſhed with that *Unction from the HOLY ONE*, which tends to enlighten the Eyes, and chear the Heart; which ſweetens the Enjoyments of Life, ſoftens the Horrors of Death, and prepares for the Fruitions of Eternity.

* Theſe, if I remember right, are the three Things, which St. *Auguſtine* declared, would, beyond all others, moſt eminently gratify his *Curioſity*.

Let me take the *Lark* for my Pattern; which, as I was lately returning from an Evening Ramble, attracted my Obſervation.—Warbling her CREATOR's Praiſe, ſhe mounted in the ſerene Sky. Still ſhe warbled, and ſtill ſhe mounted, as though ſhe meant to carry her Tribute of Harmony unto the very Gates of Heaven. Having reached, at laſt, her higheſt Elevation, and perceiving herſelf at an immenſe Diſtance from the ſtarry Regions, ſhe dropped on a ſudden to the Earth; and diſcontinued, at once, both to ſing, and to ſoar. Now the Morning appears, and is awakening the World, our little Songſter retunes her Throat, and re-exerts her Wings.—As I have endeavoured, very imperfectly endeavoured, to ſtrike out a *ſhadowy* Draught of our LORD's complete Obedience; I would, though abſolutely unequal to the Taſk, once more reſume my Pen, and attempt—what would I attempt?—nothing like a Diſplay, but only a faint *Sketch* of his perſonal Dignity. Such as may juſt ſerve to demonſtrate, that the Man of *Nazareth* is the GOD of Heaven.

Firſt let me obſerve, that for ſome Time paſt, We have been viſited with the moſt uncomfortable Weather; *dewleſs Nights*, and *ſultry Days*. The Firmament was more like a glowing Furnace, than the Region of refreſhing Rain.—The Earth lay *parched* with Thirſt, and *chapped* with Heat. The Meadows were drained of their Humidity, and all the Flowers hung their fading Heads.—The Streams, which uſed to flow parallel with the verdant Margin, abandoned their Banks. Diminiſhed and diſcoloured, they ſunk to the very Bottom of their oozy

Channels.—Nature in general ſeemed to be reſigning the "Robe of Beauty, for the Garment of Heavineſs." *Drought* was in all our Borders; and *Famine*, We feared, was not far behind.—Clouds of Duſt, obſcured the Air; tarniſhed the Hedges; and almoſt ſmothered the Traveler. But not one Cloud of *fleecy White* appeared, to variegate the blue Expanſe, or give Us Hopes of a reviving Shower *.

It reminded me of that awful Threatening, denounced by *Moſes* on a wicked People; *The Heaven, that is over thy Head, ſhall be Braſs; and the Earth, that is under Thee, ſhall be Iron* †.—It made me apprehenſive of that terrible State, which the Prophet ſo emphatically deſcribes; *The Field is waſted, and the Land mourneth. The Seed is rotten under the Clods, and the Harveſt periſheth. The Garners are laid deſolate, and the Barns are broken down.—The new Wine is dried up; the Oil languiſheth; and all the Trees of the Field are withered.—How do the Beaſts groan! The Herds of Cattle are perplexed. Yea, the Flocks of Sheep are made deſolate. Becauſe the Rivers of Waters are dried up, and the Fire hath devoured the Paſtures of the Wilderneſs* ‡.—But, bleſſed be the Divine PROVIDENCE, our Fears are vaniſhed, and a moſt joyful Change has taken place. The LORD hath

* At ſuch a Juncture, how pertinent is the Queſtion propoſed by the Almighty MAJESTY? *Job* xxxviii. 37, 38. *Who can number*, muſter or arrange, *the Clouds in Wiſdom?* So as to have them ready at Hand, on any Emergency. *And who can empty thoſe Bottles of Heaven*, in copious but ſeaſonable Effuſions upon the Earth? *When*, as in the Caſe deſcribed above, *the Duſt* of the Roads *is attenuated into Powder* בצקת למוצק *and the Clods* of the Valley *are glued faſt together* ידבקו.

† Deut. xxviii. 23. ‡ Joel i. 10, &c.

hath sent a gracious Rain upon his Inheritance, and refreshed it, when it was weary *.

Yesterday in the Afternoon, the Wind shifting to the South, roused the *dormant* Clouds, and brought some of those agreeable Strangers on its Wings.—At first, they came sailing in small, and thin, and scattered Parties. Anon, the flying Squadrons advanced in larger Detachments, more closely wedged, and more deeply laden. Till at last, the great Rendezvous completed, they formed into a Body of such Depth, and extended their Wings with such a Sweep, as darkened the Sun, and overspread the whole Hemisphere.

Just at the Close of Day, the Gales which escorted the spongy Treasures, retired; and resigned their Charge

* *Psal.* lxviii. 9. The Original is remarkably bold, beautiful, and expressive. It expresses not only the Thing done, but the Manner of doing it; not barely the Act of sending Rain, but that very peculiar Manner, in which the Blessing is sent. So that the Reader is both informed of the Event, and has it exhibited, as it were, in a Picture before his Eyes.

The Word signifies to *distil*, as the Honey-comb drops its delicious Juices. It signifies also to *move to and fro*, from one Side to another, as the Priest moved the Wave-offering towards the four Corners of Heaven.—תניף Thou *shakest out*, or *causest to distil:* denoting the gentle and gradual Fall. Thou *wavest*, or *dispersest abroad:* denoting the wide, the universal Distribution, of this most valuable Gift.—גשם נדבות *Rain of Liberalities.* Which implies the most copious Effusion, and the most extensive Benefits. The Effusion *so copious*, that there is enough to supply every Spot; to saturate every Soil; and sink to the very Roots of every Vegetable. The Benefits *so extensive*, that they gladden every Animal; they cherish every Plant; they fertilize and exhilerate all Nature. —They are therefore, what no Language so happily expresses as the *Hebrew*, *Rain of Liberalities.*

Charge to the Diſpoſal of a profound *Calm*. Not a Breeze ſhook the moſt tremulous Leaf. Not a Curl ruffled the ſmooth expanſive Lake. All Things were ſtill, as in *attentive Expectation*. The ruſſet Heath, and the ſlippery Lawn, ſeemed to gaſp after the hovering Moiſture. Nature, with all her ſuppliant Tribes, in expreſſive pleading Silence, ſolicited the falling Fruitfulneſs. Nor pleaded long, nor ſolicited in vain.

The *Showers*, gentle, ſoft, and balmy, deſcend. The Veſſels of Heaven unload their precious Freight, and enrich the impoveriſhed Glebe. The liquid Sweetneſs, which is incomparably more beneficial than trickling Silver, diſtils. Through all the Night, it diſtils; and cools the torrid Air; and revives the languiſhing Earth; and cheriſhes every living Thing.

Now the Sun, *mild* and *refulgent*, iſſues through the Portals of the Eaſt. Pleaſed, as it were, to have emerged from the late Abyſs of Darkneſs, He looks abroad with peculiar Gaiety, and the moſt engaging Splendors. He looks through the diſburdened Air, and finds a gladdened World, that wants nothing but his *all-chearing* Beams, to render its Satisfaction complete.

The Glory comes!—Hail to thy riſing Ray,
Great Lamp of Light, and ſecond Source of Day!
Who robe the World, each nipping Gale remove,
Treat every Senſe, and beam creating Love *.

At

* Theſe beautiful Lines are borrowed from the SEASIECE, Canto IV. A *narratory*, *philoſophical*, and *deſcriptive* Poem, written by my ingenious Friend, Dr. *Kirkpatrick*.

At his auſpicious Approach, the freſhened Mountains lift their Heads, and ſmile. The Garden opens its aromatic Stores; and breathes, as from a fuming Altar, Balm to the Smell, and Incenſe to the Skies. The little Hills, crowned with ſpringing Plenty, *clap their Hands* on every Side. The moiſtened Plains, and irriguous Valleys, *laugh and ſing*. While their Waters, lately exhauſted, again *are made deep*, and *their Rivers run like Oil* *.

The whole Earth, *ſaturated* with the Bounty of Heaven, and *fluſhed* with humid Life, wears a thouſand Marks of Gratitude and Complacency. Waſhed by the copious Rain, how bright and vivid is the univerſal Verdure! The *green Carpet* below, may almoſt vie with the *blue Canopy* above †.—The Foreſt, and every Tree, burniſh their Colours, and array themſelves in their fineſt Apparel. Which as on a Day of general Feſtivity, is delicately decked with Gems.—From every Paſture, and from all the Grove, the Voice of *Pleaſure* and of *Melody* reſounds. While the officious Zephyrs waft the floating Harmony, blended with native Perfumes; gently waft them to the Senſes, and touch the very Soul with Tranſport.

Could there be a more brilliant Appearance, or more exuberant Demonſtrations of Joy, even to celebrate the Anniverſary of *Nature's Birth*? With what admirable Propriety has the *Pſalmiſt* compared yonder orient Sun, in all his ſparkling Grandeur, to a young exulting *Bridegroom* ‡; who comes forth, with every heightened Ornament from his Chamber,

* Ezek. xxxii. 14.

† Τοσουτον δεξαμενη καλλος η γη, ως, μικρω δειν, αμιλλασθαι τω ουρανω. Chryſoſt. in Gen.

‡ Pſal. xix. 5.

ber, to ſhew Himſelf in the moſt diſtinguiſhed Period of his Life, and to receive the Bleſſing which conſummates his Happineſs!

This moſt charming and equally majeſtic Scene, recals to my Memory that fine Deſcription of the MESSIAH, extant in the laſt lovely Strains of the *Iſraelitiſh Swan* *—*HE ſhall be* welcome and ſalutary *as the Light of the Morning*; *when the Sun ariſeth*, to chaſe the malignant Shades, and pour Day through the reviving World. He ſhall be as the Light of *a Morning*, that is moſt ſerenely fair; *without* either Storms to diſturb, or *Clouds* to obſcure the glorious, the delightful Dawn. Yea, his Appearance ſhall be *more beautiful*, and his Influences *more beneficial* †, *than the clear Shining* of that grand

* *Iſraelitiſh Swan*—That is, *David*, ſo called by *Aſpaſio*, in Alluſion to thoſe well-known Lines of the Poet,

Multa Dircæum lævat Aura Cygnum.

And not without a Reference to the *popular* Notion, that the Swan ſings the moſt melodious Notes in its laſt Moments. *Fuit hæc facundi Senis quaſi cygnea Vox.* TULLY.

† *More beautiful, more beneficial, than the clear Shining.* 2 Sam. xxiii. 4.—Thus We have ventured to tranſlate, or rather to paraphraſe, the Words מנוגה. That the Prefix מ often occurs in the *comparative* Acceptation, and conveys the Idea of *Pre-eminence*, is plain from *Pſal.* xix. 10. Where our inſpired Author, quite raviſhed with the Love of the ſacred Oracles, declares; *They are deſirable* beyond *Gold, even* beyond *much fine Gold*; *they are ſweet* beyond *Honey, and the Droppings of the Honeycomb.*—That the Adjective, which ſhould expreſs this Pre-eminence, is ſometimes omitted, and to be ſupplied from the Context, is equally plain from *Iſai.* x. 10. Where the *Aſſyrian* Monarch, boaſting of his Conqueſts, ſays; *As my Hand hath ſubdued the Kingdoms of the Idols, even thoſe whoſe graven Images* פסיליהם מירושלם *were more* reputable and excellent *than thoſe of Jeruſalem.*

grand Luminary, *after* a Night of ſettled Gloom, and Showers of inceſſant *Rain*. When his Beams ſhed animating Warmth, and vital Luſtre, *on the* tender *Graſs* impearled with Dews, and on all the green Treaſures *of the* teeming *Earth*.

As we have already contemplated the bleſſed *JESUS*, under the amiable Character of the JUST ONE; the foregoing Paſſage of Scripture exhibits Him to our Faith, in the more majeſtic Quality of THE LORD OF GLORY.—Or rather, unites the two grand Peculiarities, which render Him *unparalleled* in his perſonal, and *all-ſufficient* in his mediatorial Capacity.

Great, unſpeakably great and glorious would our SAVIOUR appear; if We had no other Manifeſtations of his Excellency, than thoſe which preceded his myſterious Incarnation.—In the antient Scriptures, He ſtands characterized, as the ſupreme Object of GOD's ineffable Complacency; veſted with a Glory, prior to the Birth of Time, or the Exiſtence of Things; even *the Glory, which He had with the FATHER, before the World was* *—He is

If this Senſe is admitted, We have a fine Compariſon, and a grand Advance upon it. Diſplaying, with the utmoſt Strength of Sentiment and Imagery—at the ſame Time, acknowledging the *Inſufficiency* of the ſtrongeſt Sentiments and brighteſt Image, adequately to diſplay the Glory of *CHRIST*'s Kingdom, the Benignity of his Adminiſtration, and the Bleſſings of his Grace. Should the Tranſlation appear too free and daring, and not approve itſelf to the exact *Critic*; the Senſe, however, is unqueſtionably juſt: agreeable to the whole Tenour of Scripture; and can want no Recommendation to the intelligent *Chriſtian*.

* John xvii. 5.

is every where repreſented, as the ultimate Deſire, and the only Hope, of all the Ends of the Earth; the Seed, of ineſtimable and univerſal Importance, in whom all Nations ſhould be bleſſed.—In thoſe royal, or rather divine *Acts and Monuments*, He is recognized, as The RULER of GOD's People: Whoſe Dominion is an everlaſting Dominion, and his Kingdom from Generation to Generation. —How auguſt, how venerable, is this SOVEREIGN! Since it was the higheſt Honour of the moſt eminent Saints, and renowned Monarchs *, to act as his *Harbingers*. The Splendor of the Temple, the Richneſs of its Ornaments, and the Solemnity of its Services, were the Enſigns of his Grandeur; were his ſacred *Regalia*, intended to uſher Him into the World with becoming State.

Sacrifices, inſtituted and uſed, almoſt from the Foundation of the World, give Us very exalted Apprehenſions of *CHRIST*: who is the bright, the polar Star, to which all thoſe Needles invariably pointed. Should We ſee Galleries built, Avenues opened, Paſſages hung with Scarlet and Embroidery, in order to introduce ſome great Perſonage to the Obſervation of the Public. If theſe Preparations had been made, with inceſſant Aſſiduity, for four

* *Moſes*, for Inſtance, and *Joſhua*, *David* and *Solomon*, were Types, ſtrongly marked Types, of our great LAWGIVER and DELIVERER, of our Divine RULER and PREACHER. But None prefigured the bleſſed *JESUS* more eminently than *Melchiſedek*. His Name ſignifies *Righteouſneſs*, and his City ſignifies *Peace*. In both which Reſpects, He typefied that bleſſed and only Potentate; who is *the LORD our Righteouſneſs*, and *who hath made our Peace by the Blood of his Croſs*.

Months only, how high an Idea ſhould We form, concerning the expected Stranger! What then muſt We think of that MESSIAH; the Dignity of his Perſon, and the Greatneſs of his Work? For whoſe Coming Preparation was made, by a grand Train of Sacrifices and coſtly Rites, through the long, long Space of *four thouſand Years?* On whom the Attention of Mankind was fixed, ever ſince the Fall of *Adam*; and for whom was all the Expectation of the People of GOD, in every Age of the World.—Should We not think Him worthy to be (what the *Jews* reckoned their Temple and Sacrifices) *the Excellency of our Strength*; *the Joy of our Glory*; *and the Deſire of our Eyes* *?

Every inſpired Prophet was his *Herald*; deputed to blazon his Perfections, or foretel his Coming; to give Us a Pourtrait of his Perſon, a Diſplay of his Offices, or a Detail of his Benefits. Let Us hear one, ſpeaking the Sentiments of all.—*GOD the SAVIOUR came from Teman, and the HOLY ONE from Mount Paran. His Glory covered the Heavens, and the Earth was full of his Praiſe* †.

Thunders

* Ezek. xxiv. 21, 25.

† See *Habak.* iii. The greateſt Part of which ſublime Ode, refers to the wonderful Works, recorded by *Moſes* and *Joſhua*. It ſeems, eſpecially in the Exordium, to be an Imitation of that majeſtic Deſcription, with which the *Jewiſh* Legiſlator introduces his laſt ſolemn Benediction, *Deut.* xxxiii.—Theſe Works are by *Aſpaſio* aſcribed to *CHRIST*. And, I think, it is demonſtrably certain, that *JESUS CHRIST* is the JEHOVAH celebrated in the Books of *Moſes*, and in the Writings of the Prophets. It is *CHRIST*, who dwelt in the burning Buſh, and walked in the burning fiery Furnace. It is *CHRIST*, who wrought the Miracles in *Egypt*, and the Wonders in the Field of *Zoan*. The temporal Deliverer,

Thunders ſounded his Trumpet, and the Lightnings waved his Banners. *Before Him went the Peſtilence*, for the Deſtruction of his Enemies; but for the Deliverance of *Iſrael*, *He rode upon his Horſes and Chariots of Salvation. The Mountains ſaw Him, and they trembled*; *the everlaſting Hills, and they bowed their Heads. The Abyſs uttered her Voice*, and acknowledged his Sovereignty through her deepeſt Caverns; *the towering Surges* * *lifted up their Hands*,

 and

liverer, and the eternal REDEEMER of *Iſrael*, are one and the ſame.—He is that *Captain of the Hoſts of the LORD*, who gave the Nations as Duſt to their Sword, and as driven Stubble to their Bow, *Joſh.* v. 14.—He is that *mighty One*, who puniſhed the ſtout Heart of the King of *Aſſyria*; who cut down the Thickets of his Foreſt, and lopped his Bough with Terror, *Iſai.* x. 34. He gave *Moſes* his Commiſſion; gave *Moſes* his Law; and was both the LORD, and the End, of that ſacred, ſignificant, myſterious Oeconomy, *Heb.* iii. 3, 4, 5. *Heb.* xii. 26.

It may be a delightful and profitable Employ, to examine the Harmony of the Old and New Teſtament, on this grandeſt of all Truths. We ſhall diſcover many infallible Proofs of our LORD's divine Nature, if We compare the Paſſages one with another. Obſerving how the Things, which, by the Apoſtles, are moſt expreſly aſcribed to *CHRIST*; are celebrated, by the Prophets, as the peculiar Attributes, incommunicable Perfections, of the only true GOD.—By Way of Sample, I take Leave to ſelect the following Texts; each aſſociated with his Mate, or correſponding Portion of Scripture. *Matt.* iii. 3. *Iſai.* xl. 3.—*John* xii. 41. *Iſai.* vi. 1, 2, 3.—*Rom.* xiv. 10, 11. *Iſai.* xlv. 22, 23.—1 *Cor.* i. 31. *Jer.* ix. 23, 24.—1 *Cor.* x. 9. *Numb.* xxi. 6, 7.—*Eph.* iv. 7, 8. *Pſal.* lxviii. 17, 18.—*Heb.* i. 6. *Pſal.* xcvii. 7.—*Heb.* i. 8, 9. *Pſal.* xlv. 6, 7.—*Heb.* i. 10, 11, 12. *Pſal.* cii. 25, 26, 27.—*Rev.* i. 8, 11. *Iſai.* lxi. 4. *Iſai.* lxiv. 6. *Exod.* iii. 14.

* רום which, I think, is put in Oppoſition to תהום and forms a beautiful Contraſt. *Ver.* 10.

and remained in a ſuſpended Poſture, while his People paſſed through their opening Lines.—Indeed, both Depth, and Height, and every Creature, have paid Him Homage, and done Him Service. And ſhall not We, my dear *Theron*, *ſubmit to his Righteouſneſs?* Submit! Shall We not embrace it; rely on it; and, with joyful Hearts, with triumphant Tongues, ſay, *There is none*, there is nothing, *like it* *.

Does not all Mankind agree to eſtimate the Merit of the Practice, according to the *Dignity* of the Perſon? If a Neighbour of inferior Rank, viſit ſome poor afflicted Wretch, in a coarſe Garret, and on a tattered Bed; it is no very extraordinary Favour. But if a Lady of the firſt Diſtinction, or a Nobleman of the higheſt Order, perform the ſame Office; it is a much more remarkable, a much more admired Inſtance of ſelf-denying Charity. On the Foot of this Calculation, to what a *ſupereminent* Height will the Worthineſs of our LORD's Obedience riſe! It will riſe, like ſome magnificent Edifice, whoſe Baſis reſts upon the Center; whoſe Dimenſions fill the Hemiſphere; and whoſe Turrets glitter in the Sky. Or rather, it will extend itſelf to Immenſity; where Length, and Breadth, and all Dimenſions are loſt. Eſpecially, if We conſider—The *Names*, He bears; and the *Honours*, He receives—the *Works*, He has done; and thoſe *mightier* Works, He is appointed to do.

The *Names*, He bears.—The Title, by which *JESUS* of *Nazareth* is diſtinguiſhed in the heavenly World; the Name written on his Veſture, and

* 1 Sam. xxi. 9.

and on his Thigh, is *KING of Kings, and LORD of Lords* *.—The Deſcription, which the incomprehenſible JEHOVAH gives of the Surety for ſinful Men, runs in this exalted Strain; *The Man that is MY FELLOW* †. Which the Apoſtle explains, in that memorable and majeſtic Clauſe; *He thought it no Robbery to be equal with GOD* ‡.—The HOLY

* Rev. xix. 16.

† *Zech.* xiii. 7. עמיתי *Contribulis vel Coequalis. My Fellow,* or *my Equal.*—The original Expreſſion occurs no where, but in this Verſe of *Zechariah*, and in the Book of *Leviticus*. In one Text it is explained by *Brother*, or Partaker of the ſame Nature. In every other Place, I believe, it will be found to ſignify, not barely a *Neighbour*, but an *Equal*; one who ſtands upon the ſame Level, with regard to the Claims of Equity, and the common Rights of Life.—In either Senſe, it militates ſtrongly for the Divinity of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*.

‡ *Phil.* ii. 6. Some Writers, I am aware, have endeavoured to interpret away this Evidence of our LORD's Divine Nature. But I think with great Injury to the Context, and no leſs Violence to the Phraſe.

Αρπαγμὸν, as far as I can obſerve, denotes, not the *Prize* or *Spoil*, but the *Act* of plundering or taking the Spoil; *Ipſa rapiendi Actio.* Vid. STEPH. *Theſaur. Græc. Ling* —If ſo, the Text moſt naturally implies, that *CHRIST* counted it no Act of Robbery; no Invaſion of Another's Prerogative; but looked upon it as his unqueſtionable Right, to be *equal with GOD*, and to receive all Divine Honours.—*Nevertheleſs* (αλλα, Rom. v. 14.) He was ſo far from tenaciouſly inſiſting upon, that He willingly relinquiſhed the Claim. He was content to go forego the magnificent Diſtinctions of the CREATOR, and to appear in the Form of a *Creature*. Nay, to be made in the Likeneſs of the *fallen* Creatures; and not only to ſhare the Diſgrace, but to ſuffer the Puniſhment, due to the *meaneſt* and *vileſt* among them all.—An Example of Humility, worthy to be diſplayed by the Eloquence of an Apoſtle, or the Tongue of an Archangel! Worthy to be the everlaſting Pattern, and the everlaſting Praiſe

HOLY GHOST, ſpeaking of the Virgin's Son, enumerates ſeveral grand Diſtinctions, both of his Perſon, and his Office. He ſtyles the Child, that ſhould be born, *The* WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR, *the* EVERLASTING FATHER, *the* MIGHTY GOD, *the* PRINCE OF PEACE *.—The ſame inſpired Writer, though eloquent above all Orators, and more ſublime than the loftieſt Poet, cries out in rapturous Aſtoniſhment; *Who can declare his Generation* †? What Pencil can paint, what Language can

of all Believers.—But an Example, infinitely depretiated, if We ſuppoſe its great Author, to be nothing more than a *Scrap* of Exiſtence; for all his Qualifications a *Debtor*; nay, borrowing Leave even *to be*.

However Αρπαγμὸν be tranſlated, the Streſs of the Argument, I apprehend, lies upon the Word ἴσα. If this ſignifies a *real* and *proper* Equality, the Proof ſeems, to me at leaſt, irrefragable.—How ſhall We determine the exact Significancy of this important Word? By having recourſe to *Homer*'s Works, or to *Heathen* Authors? This, in caſe the *ſacred* Writers will decide the Queſtion, would be like going from *Jeruſalem* to *Athens* for the Solution of a religious Doubt, even while the College of Apoſtles is aſſembled at the former City.—The Word occurs five or ſix Times in *their* Writings. They uſe it, it is true, in the adjective Form. But the Adjective is very ſufficient to ſettle the Signification of the Adverb. If I know the Meaning of ἴσος, I ſhall be at no Loſs to underſtand the Import of ἴσα.—See *Matt.* xx. 12. *Luke* vi. 34. *John* v. 18. *Acts* xi. 17. *Rev.* xxi. 16. In all which Places it expreſſes, not a bare Reſemblance or Likeneſs only, but a real and proper *Equality*. As *Milton* ſpeaks of *CHRIST*, alluding to this Paſſage, and finely illuſtrating its Senſe;

——— ——— *Thron'd in higheſt Bliſs,*
Equal to GOD, and Equally enjoying
Godlike Fruition.

* Iſai. ix. 6. † Iſai. liii. 8.

can expreſs, his matchleſs Excellencies? And may We not with equal Propriety demand; Who can declare the meritorious Perfection of his Righteouſneſs? It is precious beyond Compariſon: beyond Imagination.

The *Honours* which our LORD receives, are proportioned to the illuſtrious Characters, which He ſuſtains.—*John* the Baptiſt, than whom a greater Prophet, or a better Judge, was not born of Woman, profeſſes Himſelf unworthy, *to ſtoop down and unlooſe the Latchet of his Shoes* *: unworthy, though a burning and ſhining Light in his Generation, to perform the meaneſt Service to this PRINCE of Heaven.—*Stephen*, who leads the Van in the noble Army of Chriſtian Martyrs, beheld ſuch a Repreſentation of his crucified MASTER's Glory; as enabled Him to *exult* with divine *Delight*, even amidſt the furious Aſſaults of his Perſecutors, and under the inſupportable Blows of his Murderers †. Aſſured, that *JESUS* has all Power in Heaven and Earth, by an Act of the moſt ſolemn Worſhip, He *commits* his departing *Soul* (that unſpeakably important Truſt!) to the omnipotent Hand of his REDEEMER ‡.—Nor by the firſt Martyr alone, but in all Churches of the Saints, and in every Age of Chriſtianity, has the *LORD JESUS* been addreſſed, as the conſtant Object of his People's *Adoration*; and acknowledged, as the ever faithful *Depoſitary* of their eternal Intereſts.

When *Iſaiah* beheld a viſionary Manifeſtation of *CHRIST* ‖, the firſt-born Sons of Light were waiting

* Mark i. 7. † Acts vii. 56. ‡ Acts vii. 59.
‖ *Iſai.* vi. 1, 2, &c. compared with *John* xii. 41.

waiting around Him, in Poſtures of dutiful Submiſſion. Theſe celeſtial Beings, whoſe very *Feet* are too bright for Mortals to view, veiled their *Faces* before his infinitely ſuperior Effulgence. The Seraphs, who are all Zeal and all Love, celebrate his Perfections, and cried one to another, *The whole Earth is full of his Glory.*—And is not *Heaven* alſo filled with his Glory? Does not *Heaven* likewiſe reſound with his Praiſe? The beloved Diſciple, in a Viſion no leſs clear and far more magnificent, beholds the LAMB that was ſlain, ſtanding in the *midſt* of a reſplendent *Throne.* Which is moſt beautifully adorned with a circling Rainbow, and terribly dignified, by the Blaze of Lightnings; and awfully ſurrounded, with Peals of Thunder. Before this auguſt Throne, and at the Diſpoſal of the once ſlaughtered SAVIOUR, are *ſeven Lamps of burning Fire*; expreſſive of the DIVINE SPIRIT, in all the Variety of his miraculous Gifts, and ſanctifying Graces *.—Four and twenty Elders, clothed in white Raiment, with Crowns on their Heads, and the Harps of GOD in their Hands, fall proſtrate in deepeſt Homage before the LAMB. They ſtrike the golden Strings, and ſing that ſublime euchariſtic Hymn; *Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof: for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed Us to GOD by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation; and haſt made Us, unto our GOD, Kings and Prieſts* †.

Behold the Hierarchies of Angels: they are in Number ten thouſand times ten thouſand—All are Children of the King immortal, and each is brighter than

* Rev. iv. 5. † Rev. v. 9, 10.

than the Morning Star.—*Hark!* They raiſe their Voices, and awaken all the Powers of Harmony. Hoſannas, loud and rapturous, fill the eternal Regions.—Do You enquire; *Who* is the Cauſe of this ſacred Jubilee, and what is the Burden of this celeſtial Song? The very Perſon We are extolling, and the very Doctrine We would eſtabliſh. *Worthy*, they cry, *worthy is the LAMB that was ſlain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wiſdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Bleſſing.*—Nor theſe alone, but every Creature which is in Heaven, and on the Earth, and under the Earth, and ſuch as are in the Sea, join the immenſe Chorus. In ſweet reſponſive Strains of Melody and Devotion, they ſing and ſpeak Praiſes to IMMANUEL: *Bleſſing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, be unto Him that ſitteth upon the Throne, and unto the LAMB for ever and ever* *.

This, You obſerve, is the devout Acknowledgment, not only of the Cherubim, the Seraphim, and the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, but of *every Creature.*—The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, which garniſh the *Heavens*—Beaſts and creeping Things, Mountains and Hills, fruitful Trees and all Cedars, which repleniſh the *Earth*—Metals and Minerals, Gems and Foſſils, the ſubterraneous Riches of Nature, or Things which are *under the Earth*—Even all thoſe Objects, which my *Theron* lately contemplated, do, each in a proper Way, magnify the *LORD JESUS.* They bear witneſs to his Power, as their CREATOR; they are ſubſervient to his Deſigns, as our MEDIATOR; and, in *this* Manner, they all glorify his holy Name.

Under

* Rev. v. 11, 12, 13.

Under ſuch Views of the bleſſed REDEEMER, enlarged and elevated even to Aſtoniſhment, is it poſſible to *over-rate* the Worth of his Obedience? Is it poſſible to lay *too much* Streſs on his expiatory Sacrifice, or aſcribe *too much* Efficacy to his vicarious Righteouſneſs.

To the Honours, which He receives, let Us add the *Works* which He has done. By theſe, in the Days of his Fleſh, were diſplayed the Greatneſs of his Glory, and the Magnificence of his Majeſty.

Behold! ſays the Almighty FATHER. *My Servant*; He who condeſcends to become my Servant in the matchleſs Work of Redemption; *ſhall deal prudently*, ſhall conduct Himſelf with all the Dignity and all the Sanctity of Wiſdom. In conſequence of which, *He ſhall be exalted, be extolled, and be very high* *.—The Paraphraſe of the *Jewiſh* Commentators on this beautiful Climax is, though inadequate, not contemptible. "The MESSIAH, "they ſay, ſhall be higher than *Abraham*, more il-"luſtrious than *Moſes*, and exalted above the An-"gels of Light, even above the *prime Miniſters* † of "Heaven."—What follows, is an Attempt to render this Expoſition ſomewhat *leſs defective*.

Here, could You open my Chamber-door, and throw a Glance upon your Friend, you would find Him in the ſame Attitude, and under the ſame Perplexity, which were formerly obſerved in *Phocion*. Sitting one Day, amidſt an Aſſembly of the People, and preparing to make a public Oration, He

* Iſai. lii. 13.

† *Prime Miniſters*, this is almoſt a literal Tranſlation of their Words, מלאכי השרת

He appeared uncommonly thoughtful. Being aſked the Reaſon, " I am conſidering, ſaid He, how I " may *ſhorten*, what I ſhall have Occaſion to ſpeak." —The Compaſs of my Subject, would demand many Volumes; whereas, the Limits of my Letter, will allow but a few Paragraphs.

Our LORD gave Sight to the *Blind*. He poured Day upon thoſe hopeleſs and benighted Eyes, which had never been viſited with the leaſt dawning Ray.—The *Dumb*, at his Command, found a ready Tongue, and burſt into Songs of Praiſe. The *Deaf* were all Ear, and liſtened to the joyful Sound of Salvation.—The *Lame*, lame from their very Birth, threw aſide their Crutches, and full of Tranſport and Exultation, leaped like the bounding Roe*.

—He

* We have the fineſt Repreſentation of this Event, given Us by the inſpired Hiſtorian, *Acts* iii. 8. *And He leaping up, ſtood, and walked, and entered with them into the Temple; walking, and leaping, and praiſing GOD.*— The very Language ſeems to exult, in a *redundant Flow* of expreſſive Phraſes; juſt as a poor Cripple, who never knew either the Comfort of bodily Vigour, or the Pleaſure of local Motion, may be ſuppoſed to do, when ſuddenly and unexpectedly bleſſed with both. He would exert his new acquired Powers again and again; firſt in one Attitude, then in another. Sometimes to try, whether He was really healed, and not under the pleaſing Deluſion of a Dream; ſometimes from a Tranſport of conſcious Delight, and to expreſs the Sallies of Joy that ſprung up in his Heart.

Though I acknowledge Mr. *Pope*'s Deſcription to be extremely beautiful,

——— The Lame their Crutch forego,
And leap exulting like the bounding Roe;

yet I cannot perſuade myſelf, that it is to be compared with St. *Luke*'s Draught, either in the Variety of Figures;

in

—He reſtored *Floridity* and *Beauty* to the Fleſh, emaciated by conſuming Sickneſs, or encruſted with a lotheſome Leproſy.— All Manner of *Diſeaſes*, though blended with the earlieſt Seeds of Life, and riveted in the Conſtitution by a long inveterate Predominancy—Diſeaſes, that baffled the Skill of the Phyſician, and mocked the Force of Medicine—*theſe* He cured, not by tedious Applications, but in the Twinkling of an Eye; not by coſtly Preſcriptions, or painful Operations, but by a *Word* from his Mouth, or a *Touch* from his Hand; nay, by the *Fringe* of his Garment, or the bare Act of his Will.

Any *one* of theſe Miracles, had been enough to endear the Character, and eternize the Memory of another Perſon. But they were *common* Things, Matters of *daily* Occurrence, with our Divine MASTER. The Years of his public Miniſtry, were an unintermitted Series of ſuch healing Wonders; or, if any Intermiſſion took place, it was only to make way for the more invaluable Miracles of ſpiritual Beneficence.—Let Us conſider theſe Things, my dear Friend: Let Us purſue and dwell upon theſe Hints. Let Us familiarize to our Minds the Power and Glory of *CHRIST*. Then We ſhall ſee abundant Cauſe to acknowledge — with Gratitude and Joy to acknowledge, That *our Help is laid upon ONE that is mighty* *. *That He is the Rock, and his Work is perfect* †.

Behold

in the Richneſs of Colouring; or in that Exuberance of Style, which, on this Occaſion, is ſo happily ſignificant, and ſo *perfectly picturesque*.

* Pſal. lxxxix. 19. † Deut. xxxii. 4.

Behold Him exerciſing his Dominion over the *vegetable* Creation. A *Fig-tree*, adorned with the moſt promiſing Spread of Leaves, but unproductive of the expected Fruit, *withers away* at his Rebuke. It is not only ſtripped of its verdant Honours, but dried up from the very Roots *, and periſhes for ever. A fearful, yet ſignificant Intimation, of that final Ruin †, which will overtake the *ſpecious* Hypocrite. Who, while laviſh in outward Profeſſion, is deſtitute of inward Piety.

His

* Mark xi. 20.

† It is pleaſing to obſerve, that the two Miracles, in which our LORD diſplayed his *punitive* or *vindictive* Power, were exerciſed, not on the human Race, but on this inſenſible Vegetable, or ſome unclean Animals.—With regard to the latter Caſe, the Caſe I mean of the *Swine*, precipitated into the Deep, and periſhing in the Sea, much opprobrious Clamour has been raiſed. As though the Action was *injurious* to the Property of the Owners.—Not to mention various Conſiderations, which prove the Wiſdom and Benignity of our LORD's Procedure, I would only aſk the Complainer or the Caviller, Whether it was not, according to the *Moſaic* Law, an Act of righteous *diſtributive Juſtice?*

That was a bitter, and, I think, an uncharitable Reflection, made by a ſatyrical Perſon, upon hearing of Biſhop *Kidder*'s Calamity, in the Palace of *Bath* and *Wells*. (He and his Lady were killed, by the Fall of a Stack of Chimnies.) *What Buſineſs had He there?* Intimating, that He was treated as He deſerved. That He was an Intruder into the Preferment, and an unjuſt Supplanter of the pious (ejected) Biſhop *Kenn*. But We may very truly, and very juſtly, apply the ſarcaſtic Interrogation, on this Occaſion; *What Buſineſs had the Swine among the* Gaderenes? Wherefore did the Sons of *Iſrael* debaſe and defile themſelves, with this unclean Beaſt? It was a Kind of *contraband* Goods; prohibited by the Statute-Law of their Kingdom; and for that Reaſon, a legal Forfeiture. So that to ſeize, confiſcate, or deſtroy it, was only to adminiſter Juſtice, and execute the Law.

His Eye looked through the *World of Waters*; diſcerned the Fiſh, which had juſt ſwallowed a Piece of ſilver Coin; and guided its Courſe to *Peter's* Hook *. 'Tis true, when the Gatherers of the *ſacred Tax* came, to collect his Share for the Reparation of the Temple; He had not a Sufficiency of Money, to ſatisfy ſo ſmall a Demand †. Yet He takes occaſion, from this moſt abject Poverty, to manifeſt the Immenſity of his Riches. He makes the great Deep his *Revenue*; and bids the ſcaly Nations bring him their *Tribute*. Never was ſuch Indigence aſſociated with ſuch Magnificence! And never, never let Us forget, that the Indigence was ours, the Magnificence all his own!

The *Waters* themſelves, it may be ſaid, are far more unmangeable, than their Inhabitants. Who can controul that *outrageous Element*? Which has deſtroyed ſo many gallant Fleets, with the Armies they bore; and which would laugh at the Oppoſition of the united World.—The *LORD JESUS* walks upon its rolling Surges ‡. The rolling Surges,

* *Matt.* xvii. 27. How wonderful is this ſeemingly little Miracle! Or rather, what a *Cluſter* of Wonders is comprized in this *ſingle* Act!—That any Fiſh, with Money in its Mouth, ſhould be catched—with Money juſt of ſuch a Value—and in the very firſt Fiſh that offered itſelf—What a pregnant Diſplay of *Omniſcience* to foreſee, of *Omnipotence* to over-rule, all theſe *fortuitous* Incidents!

† About Fourteen-pence.

‡ *He treadeth upon the Waves of the Sea*, is one of the Prerogatives aſcribed to the Supreme BEING, *Job* ix. 8. The original Word גבות ſignifies a Sea, that rolls *Mountain-high*; and ſuch, We have Reaſon to ſuppoſe, were the Waves on which our LORD walked; ſince the Veſſel, to which He bent his Courſe, was βασανιζομενον, *laſhed*,

Surges, ſuſpend their Fury; they even forget their fluid Nature, to ſupport the Footſteps of their GOD.—He ſpeaks, and the moſt tempeſtuous Agitations are a Calm. The madding Ocean, like the diſpoſſeſſed Demoniac, comes to the Feet of JESUS, ſedate, and peaceable, and in its right Mind. It is true; *the Waves of the Sea are mighty, and rage horribly; but yet the LORD*, who loved Us, and waſhed Us from our Sins in his own Blood, *is mightier* *.

The *Winds* are yet more ungovernable, than the madding Ocean. When theſe are hurled † abroad, to ſhake the Earth, and toſs the Seas, Who can *curb* their Rage? What can *withſtand* their Impetuoſity? Even the boiſterous Winds hear the SAVIOUR's Voice; and, as ſoon as they hear, *obey*. His Voice, more powerful to reſtrain, than brazen Dungeons to confine, chides ‡ the furious Whirlwind.

Laſhed, battered, tormented, by their vehement Concuſſions. *Matt.* xiv. 24.

* Pſal. xciii. 5.

† This is the literal Tranſlation of that beautiful *Hebrew* Phraſe, which occurs *Jonah* i. 4.—The ſacred Writer, deſcribing the ſtormy Meſſenger, which was diſpatched to arreſt a fugitive Servant, ſays הטיל—The *LORD hurled forth* a great Wind. The ſame Expreſſion is applied to *Saul*, (1 Sam. xviii. 11.) when He darted his Javelin at *David*, with a Deſign to transfix and nail Him to the Wall.—What an elegant, and how awful an Image! Storms and Tempeſts, with all their irreſiſtible Fury and dreadful Ravages, are like *miſſive Weapons* in the Hand of JEHOVAH. Which He launches with greater Eaſe and ſurer Aim, than the moſt expert Warrior emits the pointed Steel.

‡ *Chides*—This is the Meaning of that fine expreſſive Word, επετιμησεν, *Matt.* viii. 26. Which ſets the Miracle

Whirlwind. The furious Whirlwind is awed into immediate * Silence. That which a Moment ago, heaved the Billows to the Clouds, and filled with Outrage the howling Firmament; now, gently whiſpers among the Shrouds, and ſcarcely curls the ſmooth Expanſe.

Something there is, even within the narrow Compaſs of our *own Breaſts*, which affords Room for more ſignal Exertions of DEITY, than the turbulent Billows, or the reſiſtleſs Storm. Agreeably to the Suggeſtion of a Prophet; *For lo! He that formeth the Mountains; and createth the Wind; and*, as a more pregnant Proof of divine Perfection, *declareth unto Man what is his Thought, the GOD of*

in the moſt ſtriking Light, and gives Us the grandeſt Idea of the Perſon, who wrought it. The Hiſtorian ſays not, He *ſet Himſelf to oppoſe*, like a General at the Head of his Troops; He *ſtrictly commanded*, like a King iſſuing ſolemn Orders from his Throne; but He *rebuked*, like a Father chiding a heedleſs Child, or a Maſter reprimanding a negligent Servant.—It is one of the moſt unſurmountable Difficulties; it is abſolutely the moſt marvelous Effect in Nature; yet accompliſhed only by a *Nod* from JESUS CHRIST.—The ſame Language, moſt gracefully majeſtic, our LORD uſes, when ſpeaking by his Prophet; *Behold! at my* Rebuke (בגערתי) *I dry up the Sea.* Iſai. l. 2.

* *Immediate*—This Circumſtance, as very much *aggrandizing* the Miracle, is, with great hiſtorical Propriety, remarked by the Evangeliſt. The Sea is known to have a prodigious *Swell*, and very tremendous Agitations, for a conſiderable Time after the tempeſtuous Wind ceaſes. On this Occaſion, and in Obedience to its MAKER's Will, it departs from the *eſtabliſhed* Laws of Motion.—No ſooner is the Word ſpoken, but there is a *Calm*; not an advancing, but an *inſtantaneous* Calm; not a partial, but a *perfect* Calm. *Matt.* viii. 26. *Mark* iv. 39.

of Hosts is his Name *. The Possessor of such surpassing Power and Wisdom, can be no other, than the Supreme and only Potentate.—And who is this, but *JESUS CHRIST? He knew, what was in Man* †. He discerned the Secrets of the Heart; discerned the latent Purpose, before it disclosed itself in Action; even before it was uttered in Speech; nay, while it lay yet an unformed Embrio in the Mind.

His Glance pierced into *Futurity*: espied Events, in all their Circumstances ‡, and with the greatest Perspicuity, before they came into Being. The *hidden* Things of Darkness were open, the *Contingencies* of the Morrow were present, to his all-pervading Eye. Nay, the unthought-of Revolutions,

 that

* Amos iv. 13. Μεγιστον θεστητος τουτο παρεχων τεκμηριον, το τα απορρητα ειδεναι της διανοιας. *Chrysost.*

† *John* ii. 25. This all-discerning Intelligence of the DEITY, is very emphatically expressed by the Psalmist, *Psal.* cxxxix. 1, 2, &c. Though the Sentiment, in *one* Clause, seems to be somewhat weakened by our Version. *There is not a Word in my Tongue*, would have a nobler Turn, and more extensive Meaning, if rendered; *Even* BEFORE *the Word is on my Tongue, Thou, O LORD, knowest it altogether.* בי אין מלה בלשוני, *Etsi nondum Sermo est in Linguâ meâ.*

‡ *In all their Circumstances*—See a very remarkable Exemplification of this Particular, *Mark* xiv. 13. *There shall meet you*—not barely a *Person*, but the Sex and Age are both specified—not two, or several, but *one* Man—not within any given Space of Time, but at the *very Instant* of your Arrival—not empty-handed, but bearing a *Vessel*—not of Wood or Metal, but an earthern *Pitcher*—filled, not with Wine or Milk, but with *Water*—carrying it into *that very* House, where the Preparation was made, and the Passover was to be celebrated.—What a Multitude of *Contingencies!* All minutely foretold by our LORD!

that were to happen in distant Ages; the astonishing Catastrophe of dissolving Nature, and the awful Process of everlasting Judgment; all these He clearly foresaw, and particularly foretold.

Nor does He only penetrate the Recesses, but over-rule the Operations of the Soul.—He so *intimidated* a Multitude of sacrilegeous Wretches, that they fled, not before his drawn Sword, or bent Bow, but at the Shaking of his single Scourge *.—He so *awed*, by one short Remonstrance †, an Assembly of conceited and ostentatious *Pharisees*; that they could neither gainsay, nor endure the Energy of his Discourse. Though not to gainsay, was a tacit Acknowledgment of their Guilt; and not to endure, must cover them with public Confusion.—With a Word, the most *mild* and *gentle* ‡ imaginable, He flung Terror into a whole Band of armed Men.

* *John* ii. 14, 15, &c. St. *Jerom* looks upon this Miracle, as one of the greatest, which our SAVIOUR wrought. And indeed the Circumstances are very extraordinary.—That *one* Man should undertake so *bold*, and execute so *hazardous* a Task—One Man, without a *Commission* from *Cæsar*; without any *Countenance* from the *Jewish* Rulers; without any *Arms*, either to terrify the Multitude, or defend Himself.—That He should cast out the whole Tribe of mercenary Traffickers; wrest, from those Worshipers of Wealth, their darling Idol; and trample under Foot their great *Diana*—And all this without any Tumult or Opposition; not one of the sacrilegeous Rabble, daring to "move the Hand, or open "the Mouth, or peep."—Whoever reflects on the *fierce* and *ungovernable* Nature of an incensed Populace; or considers the *bitter* and *outrageous* Zeal of *Demetrius* and the Craftsmen, on a less irritating Occasion; may possibly find Himself almost, if not altogether, of the *Latin* Father's Opinion.

† John viii. 7. ‡ John xviii. 6.

Men. Such as blaſted all their Courage; and laid them as if ſtruck with Lightening, *ſtunned* and *proſtrate* on the Ground.

All *Hearts are in his Hand. He turneth them, as the Rivers of Water, whitherſoever He will* *; with as much Eaſe, and with the ſame efficacious Sway, as the Current of the Rivers is altered and determined by every Inflection of the Channel.—*Follow me*, was his Call to *James* and *John*: *Follow me* †, was all He ſaid to *Levi* the Publican. Though the firſt were engaged in all the Ardour of Buſineſs; though the laſt was ſitting at the very Receipt of Cuſtom; yet both He and they, without any Demur, without the leaſt Delay, left the lucrative Employ; left their neareſt Relations, and reſigned their *earthly All*, to attend a poor and deſpiſed MASTER.—Their Acquaintance, no doubt, would remonſtrate a thouſand Inconveniencies. Their Enemies would not fail to cenſure them, as raſh Enthuſiaſts. But all theſe Conſiderations were lighter than Duſt, were leſs than nothing,

* Prov. xxi. 1.

† *Mark* ii. 14. He ſaid in the Beginning, *Let there be Light*; there was Light. *Let there be a Firmament*; it was ſpread abroad. *Let there be a World*; it aroſe of Nothing.—In the Days of his Fleſh likewiſe, He ſpeaks, and it is done. His Word is a Work. He ſays to the Diſciples, *Follow me*; they come—to the Leper, *Be clean*; He is cleanſed—to the Paralytic, *Ariſe, take up thy Bed, and walk*; it is all performed, as ſoon as commanded.—Surely then We muſt confeſs, that the Voice, which is ſo mighty in Operation, is *the Voice of a GOD, not of a Man!*—Γενηθήτω is our LORD's *uſual* Word, when He grants a miraculous Cure: which exactly correſponds with that admired and magnificent Expreſſion יְהִי *Gen.* i. 3.

thing, when ſet in Competition with *two Words only* from *JESUS* of *Nazareth*. Impreſſed, deeply impreſſed by his powerful Summons, ſuch Loſs they counted Gain, and ſuch Obloquy Glory.—And ſhall We count it too high an Honour, or too grand an Office, for his *Obedience unto Death*, to make Us perfectly righteous before GOD, without the Co-operation of any Works, or any holy walking of our own?

He planted Bowels of Compaſſion in the unfeeling avaricious Wretch; and *elevated*, beyond the Height of the Stars, Deſires that lay *groveling* even below the Mire of the Swine. The *Slaves* of Sin He reſtored to the *Liberty* of Righteouſneſs; and unhappy Creatures, who were degenerated into the Likeneſs of the Devil, He renewed after the Image of the bleſſed GOD.—Theſe were the Effects of his perſonal Preaching; theſe are ſtill the Conqueſts of his glorious Goſpel; and do not theſe declare his Dominion over the Intellectual Oeconomy? That the *World* of *Minds*, as well as of material Nature, is open to his Inſpection, and ſubject to his Controul?

The *Dead* ſeem to be more remote from human Cognizance, than the Secrets of the Breaſt; leſs liable to any human Juriſdiction, than the warring Elements. What Potentate can iſſue a *Writ* of *Releaſe* to the Grave? Or cite the diſlodged Soul, to re-enter the breathleſs Corpſe?—Yet this, even this, our mighty MEDIATOR executed. He opened the Eyes, which were *ſunk* in Shades, and *ſealed* in the Tomb. He bid the Heart, that had forgot its vital Motion, ſpring into Life and Activity. The crimſon Flood, long congealed by the

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icy Hand of Death; which had not only loſt its Pulſe by *Stagnation*, but likewiſe changed its very Texture by *Putrefaction* *; circulates, at his Order, all florid and mantling with Health †, through the wondering Veins. — The *Spirit*, which had taken its Flight into the *inviſible* State, which had taken its Place in eternal Habitations, returns, at our REDEEMER's Signal, to the Tenement of mouldering Clay; and, by the amazing Viſit, proclaims his Sovereignty over thoſe *unknown Realms*, and their myſterious Inhabitants.

As He recals from, ſo He admits into, the Abodes of future Happineſs. His Hands, when ſwollen with Wounds, and nailed to the Tree, evidently ſuſtained *the Keys of Hell and of Death* ‡. Then, even then, He opened and He ſhut either the Gates of the Grave, or the Portals of Paradiſe. What He ſays to the penitent Thief, is the Language of ſupreme Authority; *To Day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe* §. It is a royal *Mandamus*. He

 ſpeaks

* John xi. 39.

† *Mantling with Health*—Such was the State of thoſe Bodies, which our LORD raiſed from the Dead. Not weak and languid, like Patients beginning to recover, from a tedious or violent Illneſs. On the contrary, they were no ſooner alive, than perfectly well. Their Appetite, their Vigour, and every happy Concomitant of Health, returned together with their Life.—To demonſtrate this wonderful Circumſtance, and render it more obſervable, our SAVIOUR, when he reſcued the Ruler's Daughter from the Dominion of Death, commanded to give Her Meat. A Command, which, ſuperficially conſidered, might ſeem unworthy of Notice. But viewed in this Connection, appears graceful and important; ſuch as tends, if not to aggrandize the Miracle, yet to place it in the moſt ſtriking Light. See *Luke* viii. 55.

‡ Rev. i. 18. § Luke xxiii. 43.

ſpeaks from the Croſs, as from a Throne. While executed as a Malefactor, He not only diſpenſes Pardon, but diſpoſes of Seats in Glory.

Does our LORD's Superiority extend to thoſe malignant Beings, the Devil and his Angels? — Even theſe, in ſpight of all their formidable Strength *, and inextinguiſhable Rage, He makes his Footſtool. He brake the Teeth of thoſe infernal Lions; and reſcued the helpleſs Prey, on which their bloody Jaws were cloſing. At his Command, they abandon their Conqueſts; and relinquiſh, however *indignant*, however *reluctant*, their long-accuſtomed Habitations. His *ſingle* Command, more forcible than *ten thouſand* Thunderbolts, diſpoſſeſſes

* *Milton*, deſcribing the Power of the apoſtate Angels, ſays;

> ——*The leaſt of Whom could wield*
> *Theſe Elements; and arm Him with the Force*
> *Of all their Regions.* Book VI. 221.

This I lay before the Reader, but dare not avouch for Truth, becauſe it is not confirmed by Scripture. Thus much however, is evident from our unerring Book; That their Might is very great, and very formidable. *Satan* is called *The GOD of this World.* 2 Cor. iv. 4. He and his Angels are ſtyled, *The Rulers of the Darkneſs of this World.* Eph. vi. 12. They had for many Ages, obtained an abſolute Dominion, not over a few Kingdoms only, but over all the Nations of the Earth, *Judæa* only excepted. The Apoſtle teaches Us to conſider the Oppoſition of Fleſh and Blood, even of all Mankind, though aſſociated in one hoſtile League; as far leſs to be feared, than the Enmity and Rage of *Principalities, and Powers, and ſpiritual Wickedneſſes.*—After ſuch an Account of our inviſible Enemies, ſhould not We cry mightily to our Captain, and their Conqueror? "LORD, never leave "Us, nor forſake Us. But hide Us under the Shadow "of thy Wings, and cover our Heads in the Day of "Battle!"

poſſeſſes a whole Legion * of thoſe fierce and haughty Spirits: drives them, all terrified and deprecating ſeverer Vengeance, to ſeek Reſt in ſolitary Deſarts, or to herd with the moſt ſordid Brutes.

As the bleſſed *JESUS* treads upon the Necks of thoſe Powers of Darkneſs, He receives the willing Services of the *Angels of Light*. The Angels, in compariſon of Men, are ſtyled *Gods*. How great muſt be their Luſtre and Glory! Since their very Appearance ſtruck Prophets almoſt dead with Fear, and tempted even an Apoſtle to Idolatry. Yet, when the firſt-begotten SON is brought into the World, theſe Gods are commanded to worſhip Him †. Though they *excel* ‡ in Strength, and are *active*

* Mark v. 9.

† Compare *Heb.* i. 6. with *Pſal.* xcvii. 7.

‡ Would any One ſee a Sketch of the Glory and Excellence of the angelic Nature? Let Him ſee it, in that inimitably fine Stroke of the ſacred Pencil. *I ſaw another Angel come down from Heaven, having great Power, and the Earth was lightened with his Glory.* Rev. xviii. 1. The laſt Clauſe is, I think, one of the moſt maſterly Touches of deſcriptive Painting, extant in Hiſtory, Poetry, or Oratory. *Milton* gives Us a Stricture of the ſame Kind, and on the ſame Subject. But the *poetic Flight*, though very ſublime, is greatly inferior to the *apocalyptic Viſion*.

——————————*On He led*
His radiant Files, dazling the Moon.

In this Caſe, We have a *whole* Brigade of celeſtial Warriors; in the former, only a *ſingle* angelic Being. Thoſe are repreſented, as irradiating the *Night*, and outſhining the *Moon*: this, as exceeding the Brightneſs of the *Sun*; diffuſing additional Splendors on the *Day*; and illuminating, not a vaſt Plain, not a vaſter Kingdom, but the *whole Face* of the Globe.—If *ſuch* be the Luſtre of the Servant,

active as Flames of Fire; yet they fulfil his Commandment, and hearken unto the Voice of his Words. They graced the Solemnity of his Birth; they attended Him, after his Temptation in the Wilderneſs; they were the firſt joyful Preachers of his triumphant Reſurrection; and, ſeated as He is on the Right-hand of the MAJESTY in the Higheſt,

——They ſtand with Wings outſpread,
Liſtening to catch their Maſter's leaſt Command,
And fly through Nature, e'er the Moment end.

Behold Him, now, doing according to his Will, in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth—Swaying the Sceptre, over the Legions of Hell, and the Powers of Nature—Exerciſing Dominion, in the Hearts of Men, in the Territories of the Grave, and the Manſions of diſembodied Spirits.—Doing all this, not as a Delegate, but as a Sovereign. Not by a communicated Ability but by his own Omnipotence. Purſuant to the Tenour of that Majeſtic Claim, *My FATHER worketh, and I work* †. Not, my FATHER worketh *by* Me; but, I work in Concert *with* the FATHER. I perform the ſame marvelous Things; from the ſame underived Power; and by the ſame ſupreme Authority ‡.

Then

Servant, what Images can diſplay the Majeſty of the LORD? Who has *thouſand Thouſands* of thoſe glorious Attendants *miniſtering unto Him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtanding before Him?* Dan. vii. 10.

† John v. 17.

‡ This is evidently the Senſe, in which the *Jews* underſtood

Then let my *Theron* determine—under ſuch Views of our SAVIOUR's unequaled Majeſty, and unbounded Sovereignty, let Him determine —whether it be ſafer, to reſt our infinite and eternal Intereſts, on *our own* Righteouſneſs, rather than on *His*.

We have ſelected ſome few Manifeſtations of our REDEEMER's *excellent Greatneſs*. Even the Evangelical Hiſtorians, give us no larger a Porportion of his aſtoniſhing Deeds, than the Firſt-fruits bear to a copious Harveſt. Yet, were they all particularly enumerated, and circumſtantially diſplayed, they would appear inconſiderable; compared with thoſe far *more diſtinguiſhed* Trophies of Almighty

derſtood our LORD: otherwiſe, they would not have charged Him with the ſuppoſed Blaſphemy, *of making Himſelf equal with GOD*. Ver. 18.—This is no leſs evidently the Meaning, which our LORD intended to expreſs; as appears from his own Explanation of the Paſſage. *Whatſoever Things the FATHER doeth, theſe alſo doeth the SON likewiſe*; ταυτα, ομοιως, *The ſelf-ſame Things, in the ſelf-ſame Manner*. Ver. 19.—From hence St. *Chryſoſtom* very forcibly evinces, τȣ μονογενȣς την προαιωνιον, υπαρξιν, την δημιȣργικην δυναμιν, την εξȣσιαν την αυθεντικην, το απαραλλακτον αυτȣ το προς τον πατερα, *the eternal Exiſtence, the underived Power, the all-creating Agency of the SON, and his abſolute Equality with the FATHER*. Πως ȣν τολμωσι τινες υπȣργον λεγειν τον υιον; πως αν ειη υπȣργος ȣτος, ει απερ ο πατηρ ποιει, ταυτα και ο υιος ομοιως ποιει; πȣ γαρ το ομοιως, ει ο μεν υπȣργος, ο δε δημιȣργος; *How then dare Any preſume to ſtyle the SON of GOD a ſubordinate Agent? How can He be ſubordinate, if He acts in the very ſame Manner with the Almighty FATHER? If the One be ſupreme, and the Other ſubordinate, the* το ομοιως *the* Sameneſs *of Acting cannot ſubſiſt. There is an evident Diſproportion, an utter Diſparity.*

mighty Power, which He has decreed, in ſome future Period, to erect *.

He will gather to his ſacred Fold, the People of his antient Church; though they are *diſperſed* into all Lands, and moſt inveterately *prejudiced* againſt the Truth of his Goſpel.—How mighty was his Hand, how illuſtriouſly outſtretched his Arm, when He made a Path through the Surges of the Ocean; drove the Torrent of *Jordan* backwards; and fetched Rivers of Waters from the flinty Rock! Far more mighty will be its Operations, when He ſhall remove the ſeemingly unſurmountable Obſtructions, to the general *Reſtoration* of the *Jews*; ſhall throw all their religious Apprehenſions into a new Channel;

* The Dignity of our LORD, conſidered as the CREATOR and PRESERVER of all Things, is not mentioned *Here*; becauſe, ſomething of this Kind is profeſſedly attempted, in *The Deſcant upon Creation*, ſubjoined to the firſt Volume of *Meditations among the Tombs*, &c. To which I beg Leave to refer my Readers. And ſhall more than make amends for the preſent Omiſſion, by tranſcribing a Paſſage from the *Night-Thoughts*; which preſents Us with a magnificent Diſplay of this great Truth.

——*THOU, by whom* all-*Worlds*
Were made, *and* one redeem'd; *whoſe regal Power*
On more than adamantine Baſis fix'd;
O'er more, far more than Diadems and Thrones
Inviolably reigns; *beneath whoſe Foot*,
And by the Mandate of whoſe awful Nod,
All Regions, Revolutions, Fortunes, Fates,
Of High, of Low, of Mind and Matter, roll
Through the ſhort Channels of expiring Time,
Or ſhoreleſs Ocean of Eternity.

Night-Thoughts, N° IX.

nel; and cauſe Tears of penitential Sorrow to ſtart from their ſtony Eyes, Confeſſions of unfeigned Faith to iſſue from their blaſpheming Lips.—Yet thus it will aſſuredly be. In the Volume of the divine Book it is written, *They ſhall look on Him, whom they have pierced, and mourn* *. They ſhall adore as the MESSIAH, the once deſpiſed *Galilean*; and fix all their Hopes of final Felicity on that very PERSON, whom their Fathers ſlew and hanged on a Tree.

Amazing Revolution in the religious World! Yet this, together with the Deſtruction of *Antichriſt*, and the Illumination of the benighted *Gentiles*, may paſs for *ſmall* Incidents; compared with thoſe ſtupendous Events, which will dignify, and ſignalize the cloſing Scene of Affairs.

Then, ſhall the *LORD JESUS* be manifeſted in unſpeakable Glory; and exert ſuch Acts of Omnipotence, as will be the *Terror* of Hell, the *Joy* of Heaven, the *Wonder* of Eternity.—Then, will He put an end to Time, and bid the Springs of Nature ceaſe to operate.—Then, ſhall his tremendous Trumpet rend the univerſal Vault, and pierce the Dormitories of the Dead.—Then, will He *ſhake the Earth out of its Place* †, and before his majeſtic Preſence the *Heavens ſhall flee away* ‡.—Then

* Zech. xii. 10. † Job ix. 6.

‡ How grand is the Idea, when *David* prays! *Bow thy Heavens, O LORD, and come down; touch the Mountains, and they ſhall ſmoke.*—Much grander is the Image, when He ſays: *The Springs of Waters were ſeen, and the Foundations of the World were diſcovered, at thy Chiding, O LORD.*—Tranſcendently and inimitably grand is *this* Deſcription, though given in the plaineſt Words, and the

Then shall, not *a Nation* only, but Multitudes, Multitudes

the most artless Manner. *I saw a great white Throne, and HIM THAT SAT ON IT, from whose Face the Heavens and the Earth fled away, and there was no Place found for them.* Rev. xx. 11.

In *Virgil*'s admired Representation, *Jupiter* hurls his Thunder and a Mountain falls at the Stroke;

> ——————————— *Ille flagranti*
> *Aut Atho, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia Telo*
> *Dejicit.* Georg. I. 331.

In *Homer*'s more terror-striking Piece, *Neptune* shakes the wide-extended Earth. The Mountains tremble to their Center; the Ocean heaves its Billows; and Cities reel on their Foundations.

> ———Αυταρ ενερθε Ποσειδαων ετιναξε
> Γαιαν απειρεσιην, ορεων τ' αιπεινα καρηνα,
> Παντες δ' εσσειοντο ποδες πολυπιδακυ Ιδης
> Και κορυφαι, Τρωων τε πολις, και νηες Αχαιων.
> Iliad. Υ. 57.

Here, the SON of the eternal GOD *appears* only, and all Nature is alarmed: nor Heaven nor Earth can keep their Standing: they flee away, like the frighted Roe.—What aileth Thee, O thou Earth, that thou fleest? And Ye Heavens, that Ye make Haste to escape? Surely, they speak, by this precipitate Flight, the inconceivable Grandeur of their Judge. Nor can the Tongue of Men and Angels speak it so emphatically.—How *groveling* are the loftiest Excursions of the *Grecian* and *Roman* Muse, compared with this Magnificence and Elevation of the *prophetic* Spirit!

Let Us consider the Passage a little more attentively. *Volet hæc sub Luce videri.* Masterly Performances, the more closely they are examined, the more highly they charm.—It is not said, A few Herds of the Forest, a few Kings, or Armies, or Nations; but the whole System of created Things, *The Heavens and the Earth.*—It is not said, They were thrown into great Commotions, but they *fled* intirely away; not, they started from their

Foundations,

Multitudes of Nations, *be born in a Day* *; yea rather, in an Hour, in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye.—All that are aſleep in the Beds of Death; even thoſe who, periſhing in *Tempeſts*, are ſunk to the Bottom of the Ocean; or, ſwallowed up by *Earthquakes*, are buried at the Center of the Globe; all ſhall hear his Voice; and hearing, ſhall awake; and awaking, ſhall come forth.—Every human Body, though Ages have revolved, ſince it gave up the ghoſt; though Worms have devoured the Fleſh, and Diſſolution mouldered the Bones; though its Parts have been grinded by the Teeth of Beaſts, or conſumed by the Rage of Fire; diſſipated in viewleſs Winds, or ſcattered over the boundleſs Globe; loſt to our Senſes, and loſt even to our Imagination; yet will every human Body then be reſtored; its Limbs reaſſembled, and not an Atom wanting; its Frame rebuilt, and never be demoliſhed more.

Then, ſhall the unnumbered Myriads of departed Spirits return from their ſeparate Abodes; and, commiſſioned by HIM *who is the Reſurrection and the Life*, reanimate each his organized Syſtem.—Then, ſhall *Satan* and his Accomplices, thoſe execrable

Foundations, but they *fell into Diſſolution*; not, they removed to a diſtant Place, but *there was found no Place for them*; they ceaſed to exiſt; they were no more.—And all this, not at the ſtrict Command of the *LORD JESUS*; not at his awful Menace, or before his fiery Indignation; but at the *bare Preſence* of his Majeſty, ſitting with ſerene but adorable Dignity on his Throne.

If this is not the *true Sublime*, in its utmoſt Scope, Force, and Beauty; I muſt confeſs, I never ſaw it, nor ever expect to ſee it.

* Iſai. lx. 8.

ecrable and horrid Criminals, be dragged from their Dungeons of Darkneſs, and receive their Doom at the REDEEMER's Tribunal.—Then, will Miſery and Happineſs, both conſummate, and both everlaſting, be awarded by *JESUS* of *Nazareth*.—Then, will He conſign over the *ungodly* World, and the rebellious Angels, to Flames of Hell, and to Agonies of Deſpair. Then, will He inveſt the *Righteous* with the Inheritance of Heaven, and inſtate them in the Fulneſs of Joy.—His Word is Fate. His Sentence is irrevocable. Immutability ſeals, and Eternity executes, whatever He decrees.

And has *this JESUS*, ſo glorious, ſo majeſtic, ſo adorable—has HE vouchſafed to take our Nature, and become our Righteouſneſs? Was HE made under the Law? Did HE fulfil all its Demands? Give perfect Satisfaction to the *penal*, and yield perfect Obedience to the *preceptive*? On purpoſe, that the Merit of *all* might be made over to Us?—Aſtoniſhing Condeſcenſion! Ineffable Grace! What Thanks are due, to ſuch infinitely rich Goodneſs!—What a Remedy is here, for the Impotence and Guilt of fallen Man!—What a ſure Foundation of Hope, what an abundant Source of Joy, to every One that believeth?

It is declared by the Oracle of GOD, That *ſuch an HIGH-PRIEST became Us*, was abſolutely neceſſary for our obnoxious and ruined Condition, *who is holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from Sinners* *—*who is Heir of all Things, and the Brightneſs*

* Heb. vii. 26.

neſs of the eternal FATHER's Glory *. It appears, I flatter myſelf, from the Letter already in your Hand, That *CHRIST* fully anſwers the former Character. From this Epiſtle, I hope it will appear, That He is the very Perſon deſcribed in the latter Text. From both, that He is what his Prophet ſtyles, *A SAVIOUR and a great One* †.

Eſtimate now, my dear Friend, eſtimate if You can, the Dignity and Excellency of this Sublime PERSON. Then may You learn, how to ſtate the *Worth* of his Righteouſneſs, and the *Degree* of Affiance ſuited to his Merits. Rather you will perceive, that his ſpotleſs Birth, his perfectly obedient Life, his exquiſitely bitter Death, are a Satisfaction of unknown Dignity; *precious* ‡, far beyond all the Graces of Men, and all the Duties of Angels; *able* to ſave to the uttermoſt, all that rely on them, and come unto GOD through them.

Conſonant to this, are the Sentiments of that penetrating Critic and profound Scholar, Dr. *Lightfoot*. Who, treating of the ſame Subject ſays— "Add to all this the Dignity of his Perſon, who "performed this Obedience: that He was GOD "as well as Man: and his Obedience is infinite. "Such as, in its Validity, ſubdued Satan, and in "its All-ſufficiency ſatisfied the Juſtice of GOD." —After which, our celebrated Author makes this important and delightful Improvement; "Think, "*Chriſtian*, what a Stock of Obedience and Righ-"teouſneſs here is for thee, to anſwer and ſatisfy

* Heb. i. 2, 3. † Iſai. xix. 20.

‡ This is expreſſed by the ſacred Hiſtorian, with an Energy which no Tranſlation can equal; την τιμην τε τετιμημενε ον ετιμησαντο απο των Ισραηλ. Matt. xxvii. 9.

" for thy Diſobedience and Unrighteouſneſs, *if* " Thou become a Child of the Covenant. Here " is enough for every Soul that comes to Him, " be they never ſo many. Like the Widow's Oil " in the Book of *Kings*, there is enough and enough " again, as long as any Veſſel is brought to re- " ceive it *." So that a Sinner, enriched with *CHRIST's* Righteouſneſs, has no Need to wiſh for any Thing, cannot poſſibly obtain any Thing, to render him more completely righteous in the Sight of GOD.

We do not wonder, that *Gentiles*, who are ignorant of the REDEEMER; that *Jews*, who treat Him with contemptuous Scorn; that *Profeſſors* of Religion, who deny his eternal GODHEAD; place little, place no Confidence in his Righteouſneſs. But it is ſtrange, that *Chriſtians*, who know the SAVIOUR; who acknowledge his Divinity; and believe Him to be exalted above all Bleſſing and Praiſe—it is exceedingly ſtrange, that they do not *rejoice* in Him; *make* their *boaſt* in Him; and ſay, with a becoming Diſdain, of every other Dependence, *Get ye hence* †!

The Obedience of CHRIST!—The Obedience of HIM, who walketh in the Circuit of the Skies ‡, and all the Kingdoms of the World are reputed as Nothing before Him!—The Obedience of HIM, who doeth according to his Will, in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth §!—The Obedience of HIM, who is Alpha and Omega; the Beginning and the End-

ing;

* *Lightfoot's* Works, Vol. II. p. 1258. † Iſai. xxv. 22. ‡ Job xxii. 14. § Dan. iv. 35.

ing; which is, and which was, and which is to come; the Almighty * !—Doubtleſs, *ſuch* Obedience muſt be deſerving, truly deſerving, of all that Grace and Glory, which are and will be communicated to his People, in every Period of Time, and through all Ages of Eternity. Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain. No wonder, that *ſuch* Obedience ſhould juſtify the Ungodly. Should make Us poor fallen Creatures righteous—perfectly righteous in the Sight of GOD—without the Concurrence of any good Works, or any holy Duties of our own †.

Such an Aſſemblage of divine Perfections, muſt warrant, muſt demand, the moſt unreſerved and the moſt unbounded Confidence.—There never was, no, not in all Ages, nor in all Worlds, any thing greater or richer, *more* dignified or exalted, than the Obedience of our LORD.—Nay; it is impoſſible to imagine, what could be *ſo* ſuited to our Wants, *ſo* proper for our Reliance, or *ſo* ſure to anſwer, more than anſwer all our Expectations.

Remember what the Apoſtle affirms, and you will not wonder at my Aſſertion. *In HIM dwell-*

* Rev. i. 8.

† May we not, in this Senſe, underſtand the Words of the LORD, delivered by his Prophet? *Look unto ME, and be Ye ſaved all the Ends of the Earth; for I am GOD, and there is nothing elſe.* Iſai. xlv. 22. *I am GOD:* this is the grand, all-dignifying, infinitely momentous Circumſtance. *There is nothing elſe* (אין עוד) for a Sinner to truſt in. He *can* have nothing elſe, look where-ever He will. He *need* have nothing elſe, be his Exigencies ever ſo great.—A GOD incarnate, undertaking his Redemption! A GOD incarnate, becoming his Righteouſneſs, and the Author of his Salvation! This comprehends all that He can want. To this no Addition can poſſibly be made. It is unſpeakably more, than He can wiſh, or think.

eth all the Fulneſs of the GODHEAD bodily. How comprehenſive and exalted is this Deſcription! It collects into a Point all the Rays of Majeſty and Honour. It expreſſes in a Sentence, I ſay not whatever this Pen has written, but whatever of Dignity and Excellence the Bible itſelf contains.—*The GODHEAD*, the very Nature and Eſſence of the DEITY—*The Fulneſs* of the GODHEAD; unerring Wiſdom, almighty Power, and whatever the great JEHOVAH challenges as his own—*All* the Fulneſs; every incommunicable Attribute, in the moſt ample Meaſure, and in the higheſt Degree—All this *dwells*, not viſits occaſionally, but ſtatedly, invariably, eternally reſides—Reſides in CHRIST JESUS *bodily*; with an Union inconceivably cloſe and intimate. Inſomuch that the GODHEAD inhabiting, and the Manhood inhabited, make but one and the ſame marvelous, matchleſs, adorable PERSON.

Therefore, adds the ſacred Diſputant, *ye are complete in HIM**. Never was any Concluſion more weighty in itſelf, or founded on more ſolid Principles. Being united to CHRIST, and intereſted in CHRIST, Ye are filled with all that Fulneſs, which Man can receive, or GOD beſtow.—He ſays not, Ye *ſhall be*; at ſome diſtant Period, or in ſome future State. But, Ye *are*; in this preſent Life, and at this very Hour. Ye are not only

* *Col.* ii. 9, 10. Πεπληρωμενοι, *impleti*, *perfecti* dicuntur, Coloſſenſes in CHRISTO Mediatore, ut qui πληρωμα pleniſſimæ & perfectiſſimæ illius Obedientiæ, qua ob omni Legis Jugo, & a Peccatis liberandi, & ex adverſo omnibus Bonis ſpiritualibus & æternis ad Salutem, beandi erant, per Imputationem haberent. *Vid.* Stockium in Voc. πληροω.

only pardoned, but reconciled; and not only reconciled, but accepted as righteous; nay, ye are—and what can be ſaid or deſired more?—ye are COMPLETE. And not barely before Men or Angels, but before infinite Purity and Omniſcience itſelf. And this, without the Concurrence of your own Deeds, only by being Partakers of HIM, *who is the Head of all Principality and Power.* In whom, *Ye are made*, what neither *Adam* in Paradiſe could boaſt, nor Angels in Heaven can claim, THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.—Amazing, charming Truth! What a Fountain is this, or rather what a Sea of fathomleſs Depth, to obliterate all Sins, and ſupply all Wants! What a Mirrour of ſtupendous Grace, and ever to be adored Loving-kindneſs!

Here let our Meditations fix, and here let all our Expectations center. From this, not from any thing of our own, let Us derive our Peace, our Joy, our ſupreme Complacency.—Into this Subject We can never dive too deeply. Of this Subject we can never think too magnificently. The Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST* is the Maſter-Pillar, on which our preſent and eternal Welfare reſts.

There hangs all human Hope: that Nail ſupports
Our falling Univerſe.

This renders his Interceſſion prevalent. He is an Advocate, a ſucceſsful Advocate with the FATHER. Why? Becauſe He is *JESUS CHRIST the Righteous**.—From hence reſults his Ability to juſtify. He ſhall juſtify Many,

* 1 John ii. 1.

ſaith the LORD JEHOVAH. On what Conſideration? Becauſe He is my *righteous Servant* *.—This, and no other, is the meritorious Cauſe of our Salvation. *Judah ſhall be ſaved*; ſhall eſcape Damnation, and inherit Glory. On what Account? On Account of *the righteous BRANCH raiſed up unto David* †.—Since then our Acceptance, Juſtification, and Salvation; ſince our Comfort in Time, and our Happineſs to Eternity, *all* depend upon the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*; how ſhould we delight in contemplating its *faultleſs*, its *matchleſs*, its *tranſcendent* Excellency!—Grand! All-ſufficient! In every Circumſtance perfect!—Nothing equal to it, on Earth, in Heaven, throughout the Univerſe!—Surpaſſing the Multitude of our Sins and the Enormity of our Guilt! Surpaſſing all, that Men can expreſs, or Angels conceive! Being truly, properly, abſolutely DIVINE!

And is this Righteouſneſs mine? Is this Righteouſneſs yours, *Theron?* Is this Righteouſneſs free for *every* Sinner? Pleaſing, captivating, rapturous Thought!—Who can forbear exulting and triumphing, in the boundleſs Bleſſing. On *ſuch* an Occaſion, methinks, ſome Sallies of Enthuſiaſm, or even ſome Starts of Tautology, are the Language of Senſibility, of Propriety, of Nature.

Iſaiah

* Iſai. liii. 11.

† *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. I believe, it will be needleſs to obſerve, that the Salvation, mentioned in this and other Paſſages, of like Import, is not limited to a *temporal* Deliverance, but extends to a State of ſpiritual and *eternal* Happineſs. The temporal is only a ſubordinate Bleſſing: a Kind of Appendage to the other: ſomewhat like the *Halo* round the Globe of the Moon, or that *faint* and *ſecondary* Range of Colours, which frequently attends the glowing Rainbow.

Isaiah thought it such an inexhaustible Source of Joy, as should fill, more than fill the Heart of Sinners. Should overflow all Bounds, and pervade the whole Creation. Should ascend to the highest, descend to the lowest, reach the remotest, and affect even the most insensible Parts of the Universe. Therefore He cries; *Sing, O ye Heavens; for the LORD*, the LORD Himself, *hath done it.* Our justifying Righteousness is finished; finished by JEHOVAH, sojourning in human Flesh. *Shout ye lower Parts of the Earth: break forth into Singing, ye Mountains: O Forest, and every Tree therein*, join and augment the general Joy. *For the LORD has*, in an infinitely magnificent and an infinitely perfect Manner, *redeemed Jacob; and glorified Himself in* this most adorable Method of recovering *Israel**, more than by all his other marvelous Works.—O for the Tongue of a Seraph!—But even this would be defective: such Ardour cold, and such Energy languid.

I have done: I add no more: I leave it—to some future Letter? to some more labour'd Essay? No; but to the Hymns of Heaven, and the Adorations of Eternity, to supply the Deficiency of my Acknowledgments.—In the mean Time, let me intreat my *Theron* to contemplate our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, under that gracious and glorious Character, described by the Prophet, *A PRIEST upon his THRONE* †. Dignifying the sacredotal Censer by the regal Diadem; adding all the Honours of his *eternal Divinity*, to the Sacrifice of his *bleeding Humanity*.—Then, I promise myself, You

* Isai. xliv. 23. † Zech. vi. 13.

will find it almoſt impoſſible, not to adopt the emphatical and ardent Proteſtation of the Apoſtle; *GOD forbid, that I ſhould glory*, that I ſhould confide, *ſave only in the Croſs of CHRIST JESUS my LORD*; and in the conſummate, divine, everlaſting Righteouſneſs, finiſhed on that bloody Tree.

When You made the Tour of *France* and *Italy*; and, croſſing the *Alps*, gained the Summit of ſome commanding Ridge—When you looked round, with Aſtoniſhment and Delight, on the *ample Plains*; which, crouded with Cities, and adorned with Palaces, extend their beauteous Tracts below—When You ſurveyed the *famous Rivers*, which roll in ſhining Dignity along the fruitful Vallies; ſtating the Boundaries of Kingdoms, and wafting Plenty through the Nations—When You ſhot your tranſported View to the *Ocean*, whoſe unmeaſurable Flood meets the Arch of Heaven, and terminates the Landſcape with inconceivable Grandeur—Did You, then, chooſe to forego the Pleaſure reſulting from ſuch a Proſpect, in order to gaze upon the *naked Cragg* of ſome adjacent Rock? Or, could You turn your Eyes from thoſe magnificent Objects, and faſten them with pleaſed Attention upon a *ſhallow Puddle*, that lay ſtagnating at your Feet?

You, Who have beheld the Scene, can accommodate the Simile, with peculiar Advantage. For which Reaſon, I ſhall wave the Application. Only I would claim the Liberty of a Friend, and once more beg, with a benevolent Importunity beg of You, to conſider diligently this myſterious Righteouſneſs, which is both GOD's and the Chriſtian's. GOD's, as to its Origin and Excellency. The Chriſtian's, as to its Uſe and Enjoyment.

Ignorance

Ignorance of this Doctrine, leads into two of the most dangerous Mistakes, and pernicious Evils—an *unavailing Attempt* to establish our own Righteousness—and a *fatal Resolution* of not submitting to the Righteousness of GOD. Therefore, I cannot forbear transcribing into my Paper, what is often breathed in Supplication from my Lips—

"O Thou GOD of infinite Glory! thou "GOD of unbounded Goodness! thou GOD "of immensely rich Grace! Who hast given thy "own adorable SON, to be the Atonement for "all my Sins; to be my Righteousness, my Portion, "and my Salvation—to be a better Righteousness "for me, than the most perfect Obedience, performed through ten thousand Years—to be a better "Portion for me, than all the Riches in Heaven "above, and in the Earth beneath—to be a more "complete Salvation for me, than my Heart could "wish, or my very Thoughts imagine—*O! give* "me, give my Friend, *an* enlightened *Understanding*, "*that We may know HIM that is true*, and know "Him as our own. Give Us the inestimable Blessing, *that We may be in HIM that is true, even* "*in thy SON JESUS CHRIST. For, this* "SAVIOUR *is the true GOD, and* thus to know "Him is *eternal Life* *."

My *Theron* needs no Argument to convince Him, that such a Prayer is an Act of *rational* and *real* Friendship; is the most genuine and substantial Proof, that I am

His truly affectionate

ASPASIO.

LET-

* 1 John v. 20.

LETTER IX.

THERON to ASPASIO.

Dear ASPASIO,

YOUR two Letters have reached my Hand; and I hope, they have not miſſed my Heart. I might inform You, what Pleaſure they gave me, and how highly I eſteem them. But You deſire no ſuch Compliments. You deſire to ſee me impreſſed with the Sentiments, and living under their Influence. This would be the moſt acceptable Acknowledgment to my *Aſpaſio*, becauſe it would be the moſt happy Effect to his *Theron*. May every Day, therefore, bring a freſh Acceſſion of *ſuch* Gratitude to me, and of *ſuch* Satisfaction to You!

To watch for my Soul, and pray for my Salvation, I am thoroughly convinced, is the trueſt Inſtance of rational and exalted Friendſhip. Every Claim to that amiable Character, is *defective* and *vain*, if it does not extend to our ſpiritual Intereſts, and our everlaſting Welfare. For which Reaſon, I need not intreat *You* to continue and perpetuate this beſt Exerciſe of ſocial Kindneſs. Or if I do, it is rather to teſtify how much I prize the Favour, than to prompt your affectionate and ready Mind.

Your laſt found me at a Friend's Houſe, which lies pretty near the *weſtern Ocean*.—Yeſterday, waked

waked by the Lark, and riſing with the Dawn *, I ſtrolled into the fragrant Air, and dewy Fields. While, as *Shakeſpear* with his uſual Sprightlineſs expreſſes himſelf,

> ——————————*Jocund Day*
> *Stood tip-toe on the miſty Mountain's Top.*

Sweet was the Breath of Morn, and ſweet the Exhalations of the freſhened Flowers—Grateful were the ſoft Salutes of the cooling Zephyrs, attended with the Charm of earlieſt Birds—Delightful the Sun, painting with his orient Beams the Chambers of the Firmament, and unveiling the Face of univerſal Nature.

My Mind, but little affected with theſe inferior Entertainments, was contemplating an Object of infinitely ſuperior Dignity. Contemplating that Adorable BEING, who raiſed—from *nothing* raiſed this ſtupendous Syſtem of Things; and ſupports—with his *Word* ſupports the magnificent Frame. Who (to ſpeak in the Language of his own SPIRIT) *openeth the Eyelids of the Morning, and commandeth the Day-ſpring to know its Place* †. Com-

* *Evandrum, ex humili Tecto Lux ſuſcitat alma,*
Et matutini Volucrum ſub Culmine Cantus. VIRG.

Lux alma—A lovely Expreſſion! Deſcribing the Mildneſs, the Beauty, and the chearing Efficacy of the riſing Sun. It is, I think, incapable of an *equal* Tranſlation; but reminds me of a very fine Compariſon in our *ſacred Eclogues*, which repreſents the charming Appearance, and the benign Influence of the Goſpel-church, at its firſt Opening on the *Gentile World*—*Who is this that looketh forth as the Morning?* Cant. vi. 10.

† Job xxxviii. 12.

Commandeth the Light, by its punctual and pleaſing Miniſtrations, to draw aſide the Curtain of Darkneſs; and diſcover the Skies, ſhining with Glories; and diſcloſe the Earth, blooming with Beauties.

FATHER of Light and Life, ſaid my tranſported Mind,

———*Thou GOOD SUPREME!*
O teach me what is good! Teach me THYSELF.
Save me from Folly, Vanity and Vice,
From every low Purſuit! and feed my Soul
With Faith, *with conſcious Peace, and Virtue pure,*
Sacred, ſubſtantial, never-fading Bliſs *.

Wrapt in Wonder, and loſt in Thought, I rambled careleſly along, till I was inſenſibly brought to the Shore. Which, in theſe Parts, is prodigiouſly high and ſtrong: perfectly well fitted, to ſtand as an everlaſting *Barrier* †, againſt the impetuous Stroke of conflicting Winds, and the ponderous Sweep of daſhing Surges.—Not that the Omnipotent ENGINEER has any Need of theſe impregnable Ramparts. *Here*, it is true, they intervene; and not only repreſs the rolling Invader, but

* THOMSON's Winter.

† Theſe, doubtleſs are "the Doors and the Bars," which the ALMIGHTY mentions in the Courſe of his awful Interrogatories to *Job*. The *maſſy* Doors, which can never be forced; the *ſolid* Bars, which can never be broke; and I may add, the *conſpicuous* Columns, on which his Providence has inſcribed that ſovereign Mandate, *Ne plus ultra*. Or, as the Prohibition runs in his own majeſtic Words, *Hitherto ſhalt thou go, but no farther; and here ſhall thy proud Waves be ſtayed*. Job xxxviii. 11.

but ſpeak the ſupreme uncontroulable Power of their MAKER.—In *other* Places, all ſuch laboured Methods of Fortification are laid aſide. The CREATOR ſhews the aſtoniſhed World, that He is confined to no Expedients; but orders all Things, *according to the Pleaſure of his own Will.* He bids a low Bank of deſpicable Sand, ſuſtain the Shock, and curb the Rage of furious aſſaulting Seas. *Though the Waves thereof toſs themſelves,* with incredible Fierceneſs, *yet can they not prevail*; though *they roar*, and ſeem to menace univerſal Deſtruction, *yet can they not paſs over* * this ſlighteſt of Mounds.

A winding Paſſage broke the Declivity of the Deſcent; and led me, by a gradual Slope, to the Bottom.—The Moon being in her laſt Quarter, and the Tide at its greateſt Receſs, I walked for a while, where briny Waves were wont to flow.—The ebbing Waters had left a vacant Space, ſeveral Furlongs broad; equal in *Length*, to a very extended Viſta; *ſmooth* on its Surface, as the moſt level Bowling-green; and almoſt as *firm*, as the beſt compacted Cauſey. Inſomuch, that the Tread of a Horſe ſcarce impreſſes it, and the Waters of the Sea never penetrate it.—Excluſive of this wiſe Contrivance, the ſearching Waves would inſinuate themſelves into the Heart of the Earth. The Earth itſelf would be *hollow* as an Honey-Comb, or *bibulous* as a Sponge. And the Sea, ſoaking by degrees through all its Cavities, would, in Proceſs of Time, forſake its Bed, and mingle with the Plains and Mountains. But this cloſely cemented or

* Jer. vi. 22.

or glutinous Kind of Pavement, is like *claying* the Bottom of the univerſal Canal. So that the returning Tides conſolidate rather than perforate its Subſtance. By keeping it perpetually moiſt, they prevent the Sun from cleaving it with Chinks. —Such, I hope, will be the Caſe, with this Soul of mine, and the Temptations that beſet me. Beſet me they do, they will. But may they never *win* upon my Affections, nor gain *Admittance* into my Heart! Let them make me humble, and keep me vigilant; teach me to walk cloſely with my GOD, and urge me to an inceſſant Dependence on *CHRIST*. Then, inſtead of being *ruinous*, they may become *advantageous*; and inſtead of ſhattering, will only cleanſe the Rock, on which they daſh.

The mighty Waters, reſtleſs even in their utmoſt Tranquility, with a ſolemn * but placid Murmur, ſtruck my Ear. The Billows, ſometimes advancing to kiſs the Sand; ſometimes drawing back their curly Heads into the Deep; whitened, at their Extremities, into an agreeable Foam. Which, with the reflexive Repreſentation of the azure Canopy, formed the Appearance of a majeſtic floating Mantle; tinged with a beautiful Blue, and edged with Fringes of Silver.—*Dignity* and *Elegance*,

* This is deſcribed with inimitable Delicacy by HOMER;

Βη δ' ακεων παρα δινα πολυφλοισβοιο θαλασσης.

There is, in the very Sound of the Epithet πολυφλοισβος, ſuch a fine expreſſive Propriety; ſo happily adapted to the majeſtic Roar of the Ocean, and the pompous Swell of the Waves,

Qualem neque monſtrare, & ſentio tantum.

gance, I find, are the inſeparable Characteriſtics of the CREATOR's Workmanſhip. As *Comfort* and *Happineſs*, I ſometimes perceive, are the very Spirit of his Goſpel, and the genuine Produce of his Commands.

How numerous are theſe Sands! Bid an Accomptant take the Number of them. His Imagination recoils at the very Thought. "Number "them! No; not the millionth Part, even in a "thouſand Years. Or ſhould Time and Ability "ſuffice, Figures would fail, and Words be inſuf-"ficient."—Nothing in the whole Round of Creation, can ſuggeſt a finer Image, to repreſent the greateſt Multitude. It brings to my Mind one of the moſt pictureſque and beautiful Paſſages, which I have met with in any Language. The Paſſage occurs in that noble Piece of hiſtorical and poetical Painting, the lxxviith Pſalm. It deſcribes the prodigious Quantity of Quails, with which the bountiful Hand of JEHOVAH victualled, if I may ſo ſpeak, the *Iſraelitiſh* Camp. *He rained Fleſh upon them as Duſt, and feathered Fowls like as the Sand of the Sea.*—*Rained*, is a very bold Metaphor; admirably expreſſive of Copiouſneſs—*As Duſt*; which in ſome parched Seaſon, and near ſome populous City, covers and overwhelms the public Road—*Like the Sand of the Sea*; is an Advance upon the preceding Compariſon, and diſplays the miraculous Supply in a more ſtriking Light. Methinks, I ſee the feathery Legions, lying Heaps upon Heaps; cloſely wedged, in vaſt Extent, and proportionable Depth. Reſembling thoſe Beds of Sand, which the ever working Surges have,

have, for Years and Ages, been throwing up, on the Confines of the Ocean. . . . . .

The Sand of the Sea! One would imagine, this Compariſon was emphatical enough, to denote any Multitude. But in one Inſtance, it is incompetent; it falls ſhort. In denoting the profuſe Liberality of JEHOVAH to his unworthy Creatures. Conſider the Multiplicity of Conveniencies, Comforts, Delights, which He has commanded every Element to afford Us. Conſider the various Bleſſings which his ſparing, delivering, protecting Providence has vouchſafed Us. Conſider thoſe better, far better Things, which the Goſpel of his Grace offers to Us, in this World; and which his infinite Goodneſs has prepared for Us, in another World. Conſider all this, and We may truly ſay, He poureth his Benefits around Us: He heapeth his Mercies upon Us: yea, his Mercies and his Benefits, *are MORE in Number than the Sand.*

The Sand, in another View, excites the Idea of great Extent, or large Capacity. Thoſe Waters are wide, but this Border of encircling Gravel is wider ſtill. It may be called the Rim of the Veſſel, which contains the unmeaſurable Waves. Are any Arms extended to ſuch a Length, as thoſe which ſtretch themſelves quite round the World of Waters? Within whoſe ample Circumference, the Surges of the Atlantic and Pacific, the Billows of the northern and the ſouthern Ocean, find Room to ſpread, and ſwell, and roll at large? Once again let me admire the uncommon Boldneſs, and exquiſite Propriety of the Scriptural Compariſons. They ſet forth the Wiſdom of *Solomon*, by this moſt

appoſite

appoſite and magnificent Image. *GOD gave* Solomon *Wiſdom and Underſtanding exceeding much; and Largeneſs of Heart, extenſive and capacious, even as the Sand that is upon the Sea-ſhore.*

A ſingle Glance on his Accompliſhments will evince the Truth of this Character.—As a Moraliſt, *He ſpake three thouſand Proverbs*; weighty with Senſe, conciſely worded, and of excellent Uſe in the Conduct of Life.—As a Poet, *His Songs were a thouſand and five*; embelliſhed (if We may judge from the Specimen, that is come down to our Hands) with the richeſt Imagery, animated with the tendereſt Affection, and ennobled with the moſt refined Sentiments.—As a Philoſopher, He had an extraordinary Inſight into the Myſteries of Nature. For He made Obſervations on the Animals, which inhabit every Element; their Natures, their Qualities, their Uſes. He ſpake alſo of *Trees, from the Cedar-Tree, that is in* Lebanon, *even to the Hyſſop, that ſpringeth out of the Wall.*—Yea; ſo unconfined was the Compaſs of his intellectual Abilities, that *He gave his Heart to ſeek and to ſearch concerning all Things, that are done under the Sun.* With ſuch Succeſs did He proſecute his Inquiries, that *there came of all People to hear the Wiſdom of* Solomon. Studious Perſons, from all the neighbouring Nations, reſorted to his Court; that they might learn from this conſummate Scholar, and kindle their Tapers at his Lamp. What added unſpeakable Luſtre to theſe diſtinguiſhed Endowments, they were ſo many Handmaids to the great Miſtreſs of all, divine Grace. He taught both Subjects and Foreigners, to *fear GOD and keep his Command-*

ments. Making all his Lectures ſubſervient and conducive to true Religion.

Was ever Mind ſo wonderfully enlarged, and ſo richly furniſhed? Yet, when he comes to caſt up the Reckoning, to acquaint Us with the Sum total of his Acquirements, He places this humbling Acknowledgment, at the Foot of the Account; *That which is wanting, cannot be numbered.* Much I have ſearched; much I have found; but *that which is wanting*, that which is ſtill to be diſcovered, is incomparably more. The Objects of Science are an unbounded Abyſs. I have only ſkimmed the Surface, and coaſted the Shores. What remains to be explored, in thoſe vaſt Spaces, which lie between the Range of a finite Mind, and the Perfections of the infinite GOD; this ſurpaſſes the Power of Language to tell, or of Arithmetic to count. It *cannot be numbered.*—Admirable Man! I know not which are moſt conſpicuous, the Humility and Modeſty of his Sentiments; the very ſuperior Strength of his Faculties, and the vaſt Compaſs of his Knowledge; or the noble Similitude, by which the latter are diſplayed.

On one Side, the *Atlantic* Main rolled its Surges from World to World.—*Immenſe, immenſe* Diffuſion of Waters! What a Spectacle of Magnificence! What an irreſiſtible Incitement to Reverence and Awe! How it fills the Mind, and amazes the Imagination! 'Tis the grandeſt and moſt auguſt Object under the whole Heavens. It reminds me of that apocalyptic Viſion, which *John*, the inraptured Seer, beheld! *As it were a great Mountain burning with Fire, was caſt into the Sea, and the third Part of*

the

the Sea became Blood; and the third Part of the Creatures which were in the Sea, and had Life, died; and the third Part of the Ships were deſtroyed *. I have not Penetration enough, to diſcover the ſpiritual Meaning of this Paſſage; but, I diſcern a moſt *dreadful Grandeur*, in its plain and literal Senſe.—If We conſider the wonderful Compaſs, and the terrible Force of ſuch an enormous Maſs of Fire; if We conſider its horrible and deſtructive Effects, on ſuch a vaſt Body of Waters, as the third Part of the Ocean; how tremendous and aſtoniſhing is the Idea! Surely, nothing but divine Inſpiration could ſuggeſt theſe Images; as nothing but an Almighty Arm can execute this Vengeance. Who would not fear an eternal KING, that has ſuch Weapons and ſuch Artillery, *reſerved againſt the Day of Battle and War* †.

Spacious as the Sea is, GOD has provided a Garment, to cover it. Profound as the Sea is, GOD has prepared ſwadling Bands, to inwrap it. Ungovernable as it may ſeem to Us, He over-rules it with as much Eaſe, as the Nurſe manages a new-born *Infant* ‡. An Infant it is, before Almighty Power; and to an Infant it is compared, by JEHOVAH Himſelf; though, to our Apprehenſion, it raves like a *ſtupendous Madman*.—Toſſing mighty Fleets, with their Thouſands and Millions of Tons, like a Tennis-Ball; and ſhattering them, with their Ribs of Oak and Iron, like an Egg-Shell.

* Rev. viii. 8, 9. † Job xxxviii. 23. ‡ Job xxxviii. 8, 9.

Yet if GOD commands, this outragious Element opens a peaceful Boſom, and receives his People. It ſmooths the Way for their Paſſage, and ſtands as a Bulwark for their Defence. They march *through the midſt of the Sea upon dry Ground, and the Waters*, in hanging Heaps, or rather in fluid Mountains, *are a Wall unto them on their Right-hand and on their left* *.—If he reverſes his Mandate, they drive down, with an irreſiſtible Sweep, upon the Hoſts of *Pharaoh*; and overwhelm the Chariots and Horſes of *Egypt*. They pour Confuſion upon Arrogance †, and diſappoint the Deſigns of Perſecution and Cruelty.—If He ſays, *Be ſtill:* the bellowing Surges are huſhed; and the gentleſt Lamb is not ſo quiet. If He ſays, *Deſtroy:* even the quieſcent Waters kindle into Rage; they riſe in their MAKER's Cauſe; and ten thouſand Lions, ſtung with Hunger, and ruſhing upon their

* Exod. xiv. 22.

† *Arrogance*—This is deſcribed with exquiſite Delicacy, in the Ἐπινίκιον or triumphant Song of *Moſes*. *The Enemy ſaid, I will purſue; I will overtake; I will divide the Spoil; my Luſt ſhall be ſatisfied upon them: I will draw my Sword, mine Hand ſhall deſtroy them.*—What ſwelling Words of Vanity are here! The very Spirit of a *Thraſo* breathes in every Syllable of this beautiful *Proſopopœia*. Never was the Language of *Bluſter*, *Ferocity*, and *Rhodomantade*, ſo finely mimicked.—How noble is the Turn, and how exalted the Sentiment, which follows! *THOU didſt blow with thy Wind; the Sea covered them; they ſank as Lead in the mighty Waters.* The GOD of *Iſrael* need not ſummon all his Power, or level the right-aiming Thunder-bolts; He only gives a Blaſt with the Breath of his Diſpleaſure, and the great Mountain breaks like a Bubble. All this inſolent and formidable Parade is quaſhed; ſinks into Nothing; expires in Shame and Ruin. *Exod.* xv. 9, 10.

their Prey, are not ſo fierce. When He bids them execute any other Commiſſion; the Horſe broke to the Bit, the Spaniel diſciplined to the Signal, are not half ſo dutiful and obſequious.—Shall *our Paſſions* be more wild and headſtrong than the Winds; more turbulent and ungovernable than the Billows? Forbid it, Almighty LORD! Thou that *ruleſt the Raging of the Sea, and the Noiſe of his Waves*; reſtrain, ſubdue, *and* calm *the Madneſs of the People.*

The Eye travels hard. It wanders over a vaſt Length, and vaſt Breadth of fluctuating Plains *. It reaches the Limits of the Horizon, where Skies and Waves ſeem to mingle. Yet it has ſcarce made *an Entry* upon the World of Waters.—Was I placed on the Summit of *Atlas*, or could I take a Survey from the Peak of *Teneriffe*, even in this commanding Situation, I ſhould diſcern no more, than the Skirts of *the great and wide Sea.* Tracts of amazing Magnitude, ſwell and float all around; yet Tracts incomparably broader, are ſtill behind; and Tracts of unbounded Extent, are behind even thoſe.

Great then, O my Soul, inconceivably great, muſt that adored and glorious SOVEREIGN be, who *ſitteth upon this Flood*; and the World of Waters, is but as the Footſtool to his Throne †. Nay; Who holds the mighty Waves, diffuſed as they are from Pole to Pole, in the Hollow of his Hand; and before whom, in all their prodigious Dimenſions, they are but as the Drop of a Bucket.

* ——————*Campoſque natantes.* LUCRET.

† Pſal. xxix. 10.

—How shall Reptiles of the Ground sink *low enough* in their own Apprehensions! What Humiliation can be sufficiently deep for sinful Mortals, before this "High and Holy ONE!" Yet how may they *rise* on the Wings of Hope! How may they *soar* on the Pinions of Faith! When, in the Language of his Prophet, and in his own SON's Name, they thus address the everlasting GOD. *Awake! Awake! Put on Strength, O Arm of the LORD! Awake,* for our Succour and Security, *as in the antient Days, in the Generations of old. Art Thou not it, that hath cut* Rahab, *and wounded the Dragon? Art Thou not it, which hath dried the Sea, the Waters of the great Deep? That hath made the Depths of the Sea, a Way for the Ransomed to pass over* * ?

How grand, surprisingly grand and majestic, are the *Works*, as well as the Attributes of an Omnipotent BEING! What are all the Canals in all the Kingdoms of the Earth, compared with this immense Reservatory! What are all the superb Edifices, erected by royal Munificence, compared with yonder Concave of the Skies! And what are the most pompous Illuminations of Theatres and triumphant Cities, compared with the resplendent Source of Day! They are a *Spark*, an *Atom*, a *Drop*.—Nay, in every Spark, and Atom, and Drop, which proceeds from the Hand of the ALMIGHTY, there is the Manifestation of a Wisdom and a Power absolutely incomprehensible.

Let

* Isai. li. 9, 10. Θαυμα παραδοξον, says *Chrysostom!* Τοτε γαρ πρωτον επειδεν ηλιος θαλασσαν ου πλεομενην, αλλα πετευομενην, πελατος ουχι κωπαις και πλοιοις, αλλα πυσιν ιππων περωμενον.

Let us examine a ſingle Drop of Water, the very leaſt Quantity, which the Eye can diſcern; only ſo much, as will juſt adhere to the Point of a Needle. In this almoſt imperceptible Speck, a famous Philoſopher computes no leſs than *thirteen thouſand* Globules. Amazing to conceive! Impoſſible to explicate!—If then in ſo ſmall a Speck, abundantly more than ten thouſand Globules exiſt, what Myriads of Myriads muſt float in the unmeaſured Extent of the Ocean!—Let the ableſt Arithmetician try to comprehend in his Mind, not the internal Conſtitution, but only the *Number* of theſe fluid Particles. As well may He graſp the Winds in his Fiſt, or mete out the Univerſe with his Span, as execute the Taſk.—If then we are utterly unable to number (which is the *moſt ſuperficial* of all Reſearches) even the moſt common Works of the great JEHOVAH; how can We pretend to lay open the Secrets, and penetrate the Receſſes of his infinite Mind! How can We pretend to inveſtigate the whole Proceſs, and ſolve all the Difficulties, of that *higheſt* and *deepeſt* of the divine Schemes, REDEMPTION!

I have ſometimes been offended, I muſt confeſs, *Aſpaſio*, when You have inlarged upon the *myſterious* Truths of *Chriſtianity*. And I have often been ſurpriſed, to obſerve, in our LORD's Character, the joint Appearance of human Weakneſs and heavenly Majeſty. To ſee Him encompaſſed with every bodily Want, and every innocent Infirmity; yet claiming every divine Perfection, every Attribute of that peerleſs ONE, who ſhares not his Glory with another.—But I perceive, the Beam was in my own Eye, when I fanſied, the Mote

was in my Friend's. The Miſt was not on the Scriptures, but Darkneſs on my own Apprehenſions.

Is there, in every Ray of Light, and in every Particle of Matter, a Depth of Contrivance unfathomable by the Line of any human Underſtanding? And ſhall there be nothing abſtruſe or profound, nothing but what is level to our *ſcanty* Apprehenſions, in the *great* * *Things* of GOD's Law, and the *glorious* † *Things* of his Goſpel? To expect this, is juſt as wiſe in itſelf, and juſt as congruous to Nature, as to expect—a Sea, whoſe Cavities might have been digged by our Spade—a Sky, whoſe Arches are meaſurable by our Compaſſes—a Sun, whoſe Orb may be included in our Lanthorns.

When therefore I read of ONE uncreated and eternal BEING, ſubſiſting in THREE Divine PERSONS ‡; when I hear of an infinitely pure and perfect GOD, made Fleſh for the Redemption of ſinful Men; when I meditate on the righteous and univerſal JUDGE, reconciling the World unto Himſelf, by the Death of his own SON;

* רבי תורתי Hoſ. viii. 12.

† Τα μεγαλεια του Θεου, Acts ii. 11.

‡ It is well ſaid, by an anonymous Author; "while "the Scripture clearly diſtinguiſhes thoſe Works, where-"in the DEITY appears acting alone, it alſo points "out THREE, who are often declared to be ONE, "as acting each his Part in the ſame Work. And par-"ticular Care is taken to aſcribe every divine Work "and Perfection to HIM, who humbled Himſelf unto "Death; that the Evidence might be very clear, where "the Objection might ſeem ſtrongeſt; and this not in "a few more obſcure Paſſages, but in the moſt open "Manner throughout the Scripture."

SON;—when a thouſand curious and inquiſitive Thoughts are ready to ariſe on the Occaſion; I will bid them firſt ſound the Depths of a *ſingle* Drop, and then apply their Plummet to the *boundleſs* Ocean. This, I am very ſure, is not weak Credulity, nor wild Enthuſiaſm; but the matureſt Dictate of Reaſon, and the very Preciſion of Truth. —Let then the great CREATOR make that ſublime Declaration; *As the Heavens are higher than the Earth, ſo are my Ways, than your Ways; and my Thoughts than your Thoughts* *. Let every human Creature add that humble Acknowledgment; *O the Depths of the Riches, both of the Wiſdom and Knowledge of GOD! How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways paſt finding out* †! And not Devotion only, but Reaſon and Truth, will ſay *Amen* to both.

You ſee, *Aſpaſio*, how I am trying to adopt *your* Spirit. You will obſerve the willing Scholar, though not the great Proficient.—But ſtay! Is this right? To divert from ſuch commanding Subjects, and take notice of mere Punctilios?—My Friend may ſpare his Frowns. I am ſurpriſed and angry at myſelf. Away with the little Arts of Self-recommendation. *Self* ſhould be forgot, ſhould be *ſwallowed up* and *loſt* in devout Aſtoniſhment, when We are viewing the Magnificence, and meditating on the Wonders of Creation.

Behind me, and far off to the North, *Cambria*'s duſky Coaſts juſt, and but juſt, emerged. Loſt were all her Woods and Mountains. Inſtead of ornamented Towns, and cultivated Plains, a *confuſed*

* Iſai. lv. 9. † Rom. xi. 33.

fused Mist, or a low-hung Cloud, seemed to hover on the Ocean's remotest Brim.—*Behind me!* Remembrance is roused at the Expression, and Conscience sharpens her Sting. Ah! how often and how long, have I treated in this very Manner, the noblest Scenes, and the sublimest Joys! Have *turned my Back*—ungrateful and besotted Creature!—upon the heavenly Country, and wandered from the Regions of infinite Delight! Therefore now they appear *dim*. I have scarcely a Glimpse of their transcendent Excellencies. Or if I see them by Faith, it is with frequent Intermissions, and much Obscurity.—Turn me, O Thou GOD of my Salvation, turn me from pursuing Phantoms, and attach me to thy blessed Self. Let me henceforth steer an invariable Course to IMMANUEL's Kingdom. May its Treasures, as I advance, *open* to my View, and its Glories *brighten* in my Eye. O! may some Odours, better, far better, than *Sabæan* spicy Odours *, exhale from the delectable Hills, and the celestial Shores!—But chiefly thou eternal SPIRIT breathe upon my Soul, both by thy *convincing* and *comforting* Influences! Nor ever cease to swell my Sails, and speed my Progress; till I arrive at *the Land, that is very far off. That happy Land, where I shall see the*

* Alluding to those Lines in MILTON.

——————*As when to them who sail*
Beyond the Cape of Hope, *and now are past*
Mosambic, *off at Sea North-east Winds blow*
Sabæan *Odour, from the spicy Shore*
Of Araby *the blest, and many a League*
Chear'd with the grateful Smell old Ocean smiles.

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the KING, the KING of Grace and of Glory, *in* all *his* tranſcendent *and* ineffable *Beauty* *.

On my Left-hand, ſtood a Range of *mountainous Cliffs*. They aroſe, not ſloping, but in a perpendicular Direction. Rocks piled on Rocks! Huge; black; horrid! Frowning over the Flood, and extending themſelves, as far as the Eye could reach. Here, bending inwards to the Land; there, bellying out into the Deep; every where projecting a Shade, ſeveral Leagues a-croſs the Ocean.

The *Height* of theſe Cliffs ſo formidable, that every human Creature who comes near the Summit, ſtarts back *terrified* and *aghaſt*. Only a few ſtraggling Goats venture to graze on the Top: and theſe, to a Perſon walking below, appear but as Specks of moving White. While the Seamews, that winnow the Air about the middle Steep, look like winged Animalcules, purſuing their little Sports in a different Region.—The *Aſpect* of theſe Cliffs ſo *wild* and *horrid*, it is impoſſible to behold them without a ſhivering Dread. The Spectator is apt to imagine, that Nature had formerly ſuffered ſome violent Convulſions, or been ſhattered by the flaming Bolts; and that theſe are the diſmembered Remains of the dreadful Stroke. The Ruins, not of *Perſepolis* or *Palmyra*, but of the World!

Amazing! What adventurous daring Creature is yonder, gathering *Samphire* from the Cavities of the Rocks! He has let Himſelf down ſeveral Fathom, beneath the bleak and dizzy Summit.—He gleans a poor Livelihood, from the Edges of Danger, ſhall I ſay? Rather from the *Jaws* of *Death*.

* Iſai. xxxiii. 17.

Death *. I cannot discern the Rope, to which he clings. He seems to be suspended over the tremendous Precipice, by a Thread, by a Hair, by Nothing.—I'll look no longer. The very Sight chills my Veins. While I view his perilous Elevation, I can think of nothing but a headlong Downfal, and fractured Bones; of Brains left to reek on the pointed Crags, and Blood streaming on the discoloured Beach.

Suppose (if the Mind can bear so shocking a Supposition) some poor Wretch, *exposed* on the Brow of this stupendous Promontory; without any Support for his Feet; and *cleaving* only to a weak slender Shrub, which but just adheres to the Crevices of the Rock. What tumultuous Throbbings seize his Breast? What a dying Paleness invades his Cheeks? What Agonies of Fear rend his Heart? As He hangs, *projecting over* the ragged Precipice; and surveys the Ocean deep, wondrous deep below!—The Bough gives way. His only Hope fails. It yields more and more to his Weight. Good Heavens! *He sinks! He sinks!* O! for some friendly Hand, to snatch him from perishing! Millions, Millions of Gold, were the cheap Purchase of such a Mercy.

There was a Time, my Soul, when thou wast in a Situation, equally shall I say? Incomparably more dangerous. Tottering, not only on the *Verge* of *Life*, but on the very *Brink* of *Hell*. Often remember thy Peril. Often review the formidable Scene. Stand in silent Recollection, upon the Edges of the Precipice, to which Sickness led thee;

* ——————*Rupes, & acuta Letho*
Saxo. HOR.

thee; on which Death purſued thee; and from which both were confederated to caſt thee headlong.—Look down into the yawning Gulph, and the bottomleſs Abyſs. See the infernal Priſon, and the Sinners that are gone to their own Place. Hear their Weeping and Wailing, the Gnaſhing of their Teeth, and their inconſolable Anguiſh. Obſerve the Chains of Darkneſs; the devouring Flame, and the everlaſting Burnings. Couldſt thou have dwelt in that Lake of Fire and Brimſtone? Couldſt thou have taken up thy Abode amidſt thoſe helliſh Fiends? Couldſt thou have lingered out eternal Ages, in that inſupportable and inconceivable Woe?—Bleſs then, adore and bleſs the compaſſionate Arm, which was ſtretched out, in the very Article of Need, to reſcue Thee from this great, approaching, endleſs Perdition. Never, never forget that gracious Voice, which ſaid—in Accents ſweeter than the Muſic of the Seraphic Choir—"Deliver him from going down "into the Pit. Let his Health be reſtored, and "his Day of Grace be prolonged."

In ſome Places, the hideous Ruins not only *tower* to the Skies, but *lean* over the Strand. Prominent and frightfully pendulous, they nod Horror, and threaten Deſtruction on all below. A Perſon congratulates Himſelf, when he has got clear of the bending Precipice; and can hardly forbear thinking, that the enormous Load is with-held by ſome unſeen Hand, till the *execrable Wretch*, doomed to a moſt aſtoniſhing Vengeance, is come within Reach of the Blow. And truly, if he had the Strength of the Elephant, or the Firmneſs of the Behemoth,

this

this muſt grind Him to Powder, or even crush Him into Atoms.

How awful to conſider! That there is a Day coming, when wicked Potentates, and haughty Monarchs, will beg of yonder Seas, to *yawn* compaſſionately deep, and hide them in their darkeſt Abyſſes; hide them from the piercing Eye, and avenging Sword, of inflexible Juſtice.—That there is a Day coming, when the ſoft Voluptuary, the wanton Beauty, and all the Ungodly of the Earth, will beſeech thoſe tremendous Ridges, with their unſupportable Burden of Rocks, to *ruſh down* upon their guilty Heads *. If, by this means, they may be ſcreened from the infinitely more dreaded Weight of divine Indignation.

Vain are their Cries; and vainer ſtill would be their Refuge, ſhould their paſſionate Requeſts be granted. Can Floods *conceal* the impious Wretches; when the Abyſſes of the Ocean ſhall be laid bare, and the Foundations of the World be diſcovered? When the Caverns of the Earth, and the Bottoms of the Mountains, ſhall be viſible as the naked Plain?—Can Rocks *ſecrete* an obnoxious Rebel; when Rocks, with all their marble Quarries, and adamantine Entrails, ſhall diſſolve like melting Wax? When Hills, that plunge their Roots to the Center, and loſe their towering Heads in Air, ſhall ſtart from their affrighted Baſe †, and flee away

* Rev. iv. 15, 16.

† This brings to our Remembrance a moſt ſublime Deſcription of the Divine POWER, which ariſes in a beautiful Climax, and terminates in this grand Idea. *The Voice of the LORD is mighty in Operation, the Voice of the LORD is a glorious Voice. The Voice of the LORD breaketh*

away like Chaff before the Wind!—Good GOD *! What racking Anguiſh muſt they *feel!* What inex-

breaketh the Cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon. He maketh them alſo to ſkip like a Calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young Unicorn. Pſal. xxix. 4, 5, 6. *The Voice of the LORD is mighty in Operation.* This is the general Propoſition; which, in the following Sentences, We ſee moſt magnificently illuſtrated.—*The Voice of the LORD breaketh the Cedars*; when He ſpeaks in Thunder, and bids the Lightening execute his Orders, the Trees, the Cedar-Trees, thoſe ſturdy Productions of the Earth, are ſhivered to pieces.—*Yea, the LORD breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon*; which, for Statelineſs and Strength, ſurpaſs the Oaks of the Foreſt, ſurpaſs every Tree of the Field, almoſt as much as the Oak exceeds a Shrub.—It is a ſmall Thing with JEHOVAH, to rend the Trunks, and tear up the Roots, of thoſe maſſy Bodies; even *Lebanon* and *Sirion*, the incomparably greater Mountains on which they grow, *ſkip like a Calf*. They are thrown into ſtrange Commotions. They are ready to ſpring from their Foundations. With all their Load of Woods and Rocks, they appear like ſome affrighted or ſome ſportive Animal, that *ſtarts* with Horror, or *leaps* with Exultation.

* *Good GOD!*—This Exclamation is introduced on a very ſerious Occaſion, and uſed with an apparent Air of Reverence. Under which Circumſtances, perhaps, it may *ſometimes* be allowable, and not diſhonourable to the Divine MAJESTY. But, when it is admitted into ordinary Converſation, on trifling Occurrences, and with a Levity of Temper; it is itſelf a very great Offence, and diſcovers a very irreligious Spirit.—It is ſo *great an Offence*, that the GOD of Heaven and Earth, declares Himſelf the Avenger of all ſuch Tranſgreſſors. *He will not hold them guiltleſs*, or he will aſſuredly puniſh them. And if GOD condemn, who ſhall acquit? If HE will puniſh, who can deliver from his Hand?—It diſcovers a *very irreligious Spirit*; is a moſt dangerous Symptom; ſomewhat like a Plague-Spot on the Converſation. It ſhews, that there is no ſaving Health, no Life of GOD in the Soul. Was there any Senſibility in the Conſcience,

inexpreſſibly ſeverer Torment muſt they *fear!* Who can implore, ardently implore as a moſt deſirable Favour, what Imagination itſelf ſhudders to conceive . . . . . .

In ſome Places, theſe mountainous Declivities lift their Brow aloft; plant their Baſis deep; and, inſtead of *portending* a Fall, *defy* the Fury of the moſt impetuous Elements. Firmly conſolidated, and ſtedfaſtly eſtabliſhed, they have withſtood the united, the repeated Aſſaults of Winds and Waves, through a long Series of revolving Ages.—The ſacred Writers, I obſerve, ſelect almoſt all the ſtriking Images, which the whole Creation affords; in order to communicate their heavenly Ideas, with the greateſt Advantage. *Iſaiah*, deſcribing the *Security* of the Righteous, takes his Compariſon from the grand Spectacle before my Eyes. *He ſhall dwell on high: his Place of Defence ſhall be the Munitions of Rocks* *; inacceſſible as thoſe lofty Ridges, immoveable as their everlaſting Foundations.

Should it be aſked, what theſe Munitions of Rocks may ſignify?—I find two Places of Refuge and Safeguard, pointed out in Scripture; to either of which, I believe, the Metaphor is applicable. *He had Horns*, ſays one of the divine Pindarics, *coming out of his Hand: there was the Hiding of his Power* †. Uncontroulable and omnipotent Power was

ſcience, any Grace in the Heart, it would be impoſſible to treat ſo wantonly and ſo preſumptuouſly, *that glorious and fearful Name, THE LORD THY GOD.* Deut. xxviii. 58.

* Iſai. xxxiii. 16.

† *Habak.* iii. 4. *Horns* were an Emblem of *Strength*. *A Horn of Salvation*, is put for a mighty and effectual Salvation.

was lodged in the great JEHOVAH's Hand; and this was the sure Defence, this the impregnable Garrison, for all his People.—The Church of *CHRIST* is said to be *in the Clefts of the Rock**: That *spiritual Rock*, of which the *Israelites* drank in the Wilderness; whose venerable and precious

Salvation. *Luke* ii. 69. *Thou hast heard me from among the Horns of the Unicorns*; Thou hast rescued me from the most potent and formidable Enemies. *Psal.* xxii. 21. Here the Word seems to denote that Power of JEHOVAH, to which nothing is impossible. And more than seems, if We consult the next Clause.—*There was the Hiding of his Power*; or, as it may be rendered, *his powerful Hiding*, a most secure Refuge, a Sanctuary absolutely inviolable. I have accommodated this Passage to a different Sense, *Meditat. Vol.* I. p. 183; But the true Signification, most suitable to the Context, and most subservient to the Prophet's Design, is, I apprehend, given by *Theron*. It is somewhat like an exalted Sentiment in the *Night-Thoughts*; which, with a small Alteration, may serve as a Paraphrase on the Text:

And Nature's Shield the Hollow of his Hand.
A Christian's Shield the Hollow of his Hand.

* *Cant.* ii. 14. Should the Reader have an Inclination to see this sacred, but mysterious Book explained, I would refer him to Dr. GILL's *Exposition of the Canticles*. Which has such a copious Vein of sanctified Invention running through it, and is interspersed with such a Variety of delicate and brilliant Images, as cannot but highly entertain a *curious* Mind. Which presents Us also with such rich and charming Displays of the Glory of *CHRIST*'s Person, the Freeness of his Grace to Sinners, and the Tenderness of his Love to the Church, as cannot but administer the most refined Delight to the *believing* Soul.—Considered in *both* these Views, I think, the Work resembles the Paradisaical Garden, described by MILTON; in which

Blossoms *and* Fruits *at once of golden Hue*
Appear'd, with gay enamel'd Colours mix'd.

Clefts were opened, when the bloody Spear tore up the REDEEMER's Side, and cut a wide and deadly Paſſage to his Heart. Surely, *the Inhabitants of this Rock* have Reaſon to *ſing* *. What ſhould diſquiet them? Who can deſtroy them? Why ſhould not the Voice of Joy be in their Dwellings, and that Hymn of holy Triumph in their Mouths? *We have a ſtrong City: Salvation hath GOD appointed*, Salvation itſelf, *for Walls and Bulwarks* †.—Happy, ſhould I think myſelf, if I was intereſted in this SAVIOUR, and eſtabliſhed on this Rock.

Yonder, on the Summit of the moſt conſpicuous Cliff, is erected a grand and ſtately Pile. At the Top, my Glaſs diſcovers a ſuperb Lanthorn; at the Foot, are the Huts of Fiſhermen, ſurrounded with various Sorts of Nets.—It is, I ſuppoſe, *a Light-houſe*. Intended to appriſe the Sailor, of his Danger; and ſhew Him, where the Shelves lurk, and where the Whirlpool boils. Or elſe to point out the Courſe He ſhould ſteer; and conduct Him into a ſafe Road, and ſecure Harbour.

Both the Situation, and Deſign of the Building read me a Leſſon: the one of awful Admonition, the other, of comfortable Inſtruction.—*Comfortable Inſtruction.* How maſſy and ponderous is the Edifice! Yet, there is not the leaſt Reaſon to be apprehenſive, of Failure or Inſufficiency, in the Foundation. Was the Structure ten thouſand times larger; was its Weight ten thouſand times greater; the ſolid Rock would ſupport it, with the utmoſt Eaſe, and the utmoſt Steadineſs. Such is *CHRIST*; ſuch are his Merits; ſuch his glorious Righteouſneſs, to thoſe wiſe and bleſſed Souls, who

* Iſai. xlii. 11. † Iſai. xxvi. 1.

who rest all the Weight of their eternal Interests on Him alone. *Such*, did I say? Much surer. For *the Mountains may depart, and the Hills may be removed* *; but this divine Basis can never sink, can never be shaken.—*Awful Admonition.* For, it recals to my Memory that alarming, yet welcome Text †, which You styled the spiritual Light-house. Which has been as serviceable, to my distressed Mind, and bewildered Thoughts; as such an illuminated Watch-tower, to the wandering and benighted Mariner. May I often view it! Ever attend to its faithful Direction! And be withheld, by its Interposition, from that devouring Gulph, and that destructive Shoal, Dependence on Self-righteousness. Be led, by its Influence, into the Haven—the fair and happy Haven of *Salvation and Grace.*

Now I have mentioned *Havens*, I cannot but admire the State and Disposition of the Shore. I see, even in its rude and shapeless Form, a most pleasing Display of Divine Good-will to Men.—In arranging this vast Assemblage of Earth and Water, the ALMIGHTY Disposer has kept a continual Eye upon our Benefit. Were the Shores strait, like the Walls of our Garden; or smooth, like some polished Globe; they might seem more orderly and graceful. But how detrimental such a Piece of Delicacy, to Navigation, to Commerce, and the Prosperity of human Affairs! Our Ships, in stormy Weather, would be like straggling Parties of vanquished and flying Troops; pursued by an enraged Enemy, and shut out from every Fortress, every Place of Refuge.

* Isai. liv. 10. † See *Rom.* ix. 30, 31, 32. and Vol. II. *Letter* V.

This GOD's infinite Wisdom foresaw, and his infinite Goodness determined to prevent. For which Purpose, He made the Boundaries of the great Deep, not even and shapely, but most advantagiously ragged and irregular.—Here, the Earth is scooped and excavated, for many Miles; as if it had been bored, by some prodigiously large Auger: —There it sinks, and turns, and winds, somewhat like the Wards of a Lock; giving easy Admission to our Ships and Fleets, but barring the Access of furious and destructive Surges.—Yonder, two huge Promontories, horrible to behold, advance, as it were with haughty Strides, into the Deep. They frown over the Abyss; but, look, with the most smiling Aspect, on the Weather-beaten Bark. Amidst the Arms of these frightful, but friendly Cliffs, the Sailor and his Vessel find Shelter, Repose, and Safety.—In one or other of these various Harbours, they drop their Fear, as they drop their Anchor; and defy the Rage of Tempests, and care not for all the Madness of the Ocean.

How many Thousands and Millions of Lives, has this kind provisionary Safeguard, rescued from Destruction! Without these most commodious Receptacles the Sea would be covered with Wrecks; and the Waves be little better, than a Grave for the Mariners. But, putting into some hospitable Port, they are beyond the Reach of Danger. Though howling Winds rend the Sky, and fiercest Hurricanes toss the Sea, they abide in perfect Security. Thus they abide, till the Storm is hushed; till the Billows subside; and a Calm takes place.

Such, methinks, is the State, the happy State of the Righteous. Who can say, with Faith and

in

in Truth, *The eternal GOD is our Refuge.* What Haven can be ſo ſafe, as his omnipotent Protection? As the Arm of his Power, and the Wings of his Providence? In the midſt of Perils, their Perſons are ſecure. Surrounded by Enemies, their Perſons are undiſmayed. Even *when it ſhall hail, coming down on the Foreſt; and the City ſhall be low in a low Place;* thy People, O LORD, ſhall *dwell in a peaceable Habitation, and in ſure Dwellings, and in quiet Reſting-places* *.

Let

* *Iſai.* xxxii. 18, 19. Upon this Text, I beg Leave to make a ſhort Paraphraſe, and add a critical Remark. —*My People,* ſays GOD, ſhall *dwell in a peaceable Habitation, and in ſure Dwellings, and in quiet Reſting-places.* Abiding in *CHRIST*; cleaving to his great Atonement; and always beholding themſelves complete, in his everlaſting Righteouſneſs; they ſhall "paſs their "Time in Reſt and Quietneſs." Having Peace with GOD; Tranquility in their Conſcience; and Security from their ſpiritual Enemies.

This Tranquility, perhaps, is to be enjoyed only in halcyon Days; when Peace and Repoſe are common Bleſſings.—No, but in Times of Confuſion and Diſorder; when Danger ſpreads Alarm, and Ruin ſcatters Havock, all around. *When it ſhall hail with a deſtructive Hail upon the Foreſt, and the City ſhall be utterly demoliſhed.* When GOD's Judgment, like an impetuous, irreſiſtible, deſtroying Hail, ſhall beat down Foreſts, though the Growth of Ages; ſhall overthrow Kingdoms, whoſe Inhabitants are numerous as the Trees of the Wood; and lay mighty Cities even with the Ground.

A moſt beautiful Contraſt, between the Security of JEHOVAH's People, and the Deſtruction of his Enemies. Which Contraſt is, like all *Iſaiah*'s Images, painted in the moſt lively Colours; but much obſcured, by the *Maſoretic* Punctuation, and the *Engliſh* Verſion. *It ſhall hail, coming down on the Foreſt.* How unneceſſary and jejune is the Circumſtance of coming down, when connected with *it ſhall hail!* Can We ſuppoſe the latter

Let me but once again ſurvey thoſe rude but majeſtic Elevations, thoſe wild but noble Deformities, the Cliffs.—*Fortifications*, reared by an Almighty Hand, to protect us at once from warring Elements, and invading Enemies.—*Ramparts*, which overlook and command the Ocean; and viewed by diſtant Mariners, ſeem to touch or prop the Sky. Which have ſurrounded our Iſle ever ſince the univerſal Deluge, and will be her never failing Defence even to the general Conflagration.—If ſome opinionated Engineer ſhould take it into his Head, to ſuſpect the Stability of theſe unſhaken Bulwarks: if He ſhould make Propoſals for ſtrengthening them with Buttreſſes, or girding them round with Cramping-Irons! How would his Project be received? With Approbation and Applauſe? Or with the Sneer of Contempt,

to exiſt, without the former? Or does the Conſideration of the former, add either Force or Beauty to the latter? Whereas, read the Words without the Points, or let them be pointed in the following Manner, בָּרֹד בָּרְדַת, and we are preſented with a very ſignificant and forcible *Hebraiſm*. *Grandinando grandinabit*; *Hailing it ſhall hail*. It ſhall hail with great Violence and Impetuoſity, that bears down every Thing. Deſtroying alike Foreſts and Cities. Laying both the ſtately Trees, and ſuperb Edifices, in Ruin.

I would not therefore tranſlate בַּשְּׁפֵלָה תִּשְׁפַּל הָעִיר *The City ſhall be low in a low Place. The low Place*, in this Connection, ſeems to be quite *απροσδιονυσον*, ungraceful and inſignificant. If a City is demoliſhed, it matters very little, or not at all, whether the Work of Fate be executed, in a high or low Place. Whereas, the Circumſtance, which the ſacred Original deſcribes, is truly important and awful. The Words may be tranſlated, *Dejiciendo dejicietur*, or, *In Planitiem humiliabitur. It ſhall be utterly overthrown*, or made *flat as a Plain*. The whole City, with all its Buildings, whether mean or magnificent, ſhall be broken down; laid low as the Duſt; low as Lowneſs itſelf.

Contempt, and the Hiſs of Indignation? "Fool "that He is! To think of inlarging or corrobo- "rating theſe magnificent and everlaſting Works "of Nature, by the *puny* Piddlings of Art!"—Such, ſo fooliſh and prepoſterous, is that once favourite Conceit, of adding my own Performances, in order to increaſe the juſtifying Efficacy of *CHRIST*'s Obedience. What a Diſparagement this to the great the divine Foundation! Which, for the Support of burdened, and the Security of indangered Sinners, is *ſufficient*—is *ſelf-ſufficient*—is *all-ſufficient*.

Hark! Whence is that ſhrill Noiſe? It is what *Milton* calls, *the Sea-Mew's Clang*. I look round and find her by her Voice. How ſhe plays on the Breeze, and ſports on the Surge! Free as the firſt, unconfined as the laſt. Sometimes I ſee her ſweeping the lofty Cliffs, or ſkiming the level Deep. Sometimes I behold her ſpringing into the Air, and ſoaring far above the Summit of the Admiral's Maſt. Anon ſhe ſhoots as low into the Heart of the Ocean, loſes our Sight, and ſeems loſt to the World. On a ſudden, the feathery Diver emerges; ſhakes the Brine from her Wings; riſes on thoſe ſtrong Pinions; and, with a triumphant Scream, flits along the Shores, or ſails through the Skies.

How wonderfully has PROVIDENCE fitted this and ſome other Animals, to ſojourn in either Element? Be they in the moiſt or dry, in the denſe or rare, in the buoyant Atmoſphere or the overwhelming Flood, it is all alike to them. They are Citizens of either Region; and are preſented, if I may ſo ſpeak, with the Freedom both of Sea and Land.—Is not this a ſignificant Emblem of that

happy Temper described by St. *Paul*; and exemplified in his Conduct. *I have learned, in whatever State I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased; and I know how to abound. Everywhere, and in all Things, I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer Need* *.

Now We behold Him in Prosperity. He rides upon the high Places of the Earth, with Sun-shine all around Him. He is received as *CHRIST JESUS*, and respected as an Angel of GOD. People are willing to pluck out their own Eyes, and give them to him.—Ere long the Scene shifts, and We behold Him in Adversity. He is smitten into the Place of Dragons, and covered with the Shadow of Death. His own familiar Friends forsake Him. His Enemies come about Him like exasperated Bees. And the general Cry is, "Away "with such a Fellow from the Earth."—Yet what Equanimity is preserved amidst these startling Revolutions! Like the *Caspian Sea*, which neither ebbs nor flows, He is still the same: the same humble, zealous, heavenly-minded Christian. Unchanged by Vicissitude, He stoops with Dignity, or ascends with Ease. Alacrity in His Business, and Complacency in his Condition, are His inseparable Attendants. *In all Things approving Himself the Minister of GOD*, and the Friend of Man.—But let us hear his own Words. They are inimitably beautiful. I never read, in any Author, a greater Sublimity of Sentiment; and I never observed, in any Description, a more genuine Magnificence of Spirit.

As

* Phil. iv. 11, 12.

As amphibious Animals live and move, either in Air or Water; so, says the Apostle, We pass unhurt and unaffected, *through Honour and Dishonour, through evil Report and good Report. As Deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all Things* *. What a noble Superiority to all external Circumstances. This is Liberty indeed. He is more than Conqueror, over every Wrong and over all Tribulation. This is the exalted Character. This the truly *great Man*.

How *changeable* is the Face of this liquid Element! Not long ago, there was nothing, from this stony Boundary, to the Horizon's utmost Verge, but the wildest Tumult and most horrible Confusion. Now, the stormy Flood has smoothed its rugged Brow, and the watery Uproar is lulled into a profound Tranquility. Where *rolling Mountains* rushed and raged, threatening to dash the Clouds, and deluge the Earth; there the *gentlest Undulations* play, and only just wrinkle the Surface of the mighty Basin. Where the dreadful Abyss opened its wide and unfathomable Jaws, to swallow up the trembling Sailor, and his shattered Vessel; there a calm and clear Expanse diffuses its ample Bosom, alluring the Fish to bask in the Sun, and inviting the Sea-fowl to watch for their Prey.

In this fair floating Mirror, I see the Picture of every Cloud, which passes through the Regions of the Sky. But in its uncertain and treacherous Temperature,

* 2 Cor. vi. 8, 9, 10.

perature, I see more plainly the inconstant and ever-variable Condition of human Affairs.—Yonder go the Ships. Some associated, like Constellations in the Expanse of Heaven. Some solitary, like Planets on the etherial Road. Two or three are perfectly distinguishable. Their Sails are all expanded. They swell to the Breeze, and catch the rambling Gales. Their Keel ploughs the Wave, and their Hull shaves the level Deep. The Mariners, delighted with these peaceful Seas, and this serene, soothing State of Things, have, perhaps, no Apprehensions of Danger. They think not of the irresistible Storms, which may gather around them; nor of the shipwrecked Dead, that lie buried beneath them. I wish them a prosperous Voyage. Yet, sincerely as I wish it, I durst not undertake to ensure it. Soon may Clouds darken the Scene, and Lightenings glare amidst the Gloom. Soon may the Winds howl, and the Tempest rave. Not Man, nor Angel, can ascertain the Continuance of this halcyon Weather, so much as a single Day, or even to the next Hour.—And let me not fondly promise myself an *uninterrupted* Tenor of Serenity in my Mind, or of Prosperity in my Circumstances. Sometimes, indeed, my Heart exults under the Smile of Heaven, and the Favour of GOD. But soon; ah! too soon I am clouded with Fear, and oppressed with Corruption. I sigh out that passionate Acknowledgment, *Wretched Man that I am!* And add that wishful Inquiry, *Who shall deliver me?*—For this disordered State of Things, the afflicted Patriarch's Complaint, is the most apposite Motto, and the most wholesome Memento; *Changes and War are*

around

around me.—But there is a World, where diſaſtrous Revolutions will be known no more. Where our Enjoyments will no longer *fluctuate* like the Ocean, but be more ſtedfaſt than the Rocks, and more immoveable than the Shores.

In this World, We are never ſecure. Calamity comes, *like a Thief in the Night*; at a Time, when We are not aware; and from a Quarter, which We did not ſuſpect. Out of ſuch a *compoſed* Sea, which is the very Image of Tranquility, ſometimes *Deſtruction* riſes. And riſes in its moſt dreadful Form.—A prodigious Detachment of Water iſſues from the Deep; and, by ſome unknown but wondrous Force, advances into the upper Regions. It ſpreads amidſt the Clouds, or becomes itſelf a black and horrid Cloud. The Sea boils, as the whirling Column aſcends; and the Air roars, as it receives the unuſual Weight. Laden with Ruin, and big with Death, the tremendous Meteor lours. It hovers, for a while, on the groaning Atmoſphere; as tho' it was ſingling out its Prey, or taking the ſureſt Aim. Then burſts—in a Moment burſts, and with irreſiſtible Impetuoſity falls. The Rock, torn from the Summit of a Mountain, and thundering down the Cliffs, plunges not into the foaming Brine, with Half the Fury or Half the Noiſe. The very Ocean is ſtartled at the Shock †.—But if a Ship, an

* Job x. 17.

† We have a very remarkable and terrible Account of a *Water-Spout*, recorded in the *Philoſophical Tranſactions*.—"A Spout (*Anno* 1718) breaking on *Emets-Moor*, "near *Coln*, in *Lancaſhire*, the Country was immediately overflown; a Brook, in a few Minutes, roſe ſix "Feet perpendicularly high; the Ground, whereon the "Spout

an unfortunate Ship, happens to be within the Reach of this precipitated Deluge, alas! no Strength of Timber can ſuſtain, no Art of Sailors can elude the Blow. All is loſt, irrecoverably loſt. The Veſſel is daſhed into Shivers, or ſinks like Lead in the mighty Waters.—So, only ten thouſand Times deeper, muſt ſinful Man have ſunk; ſunk, under the Wrath of GOD and the Curſe of the Law, had not our gracious REDEEMER bore the Burden of both, in his own Body on the Tree.

Here, I ſee an immenſe Collection of Waters, in a State of deep Repoſe. Could I extend my View to ſome remoter Tracts, I ſhould behold every Thing ſmoother and calmer ſtill. It frequently happens, on the eaſtern Coaſts of *Africa*, that not a Ridge ſwells, nor a Furrow ſinks, the Surface of the Ocean. 'Tis all like a glaſſy Plain. The Waves are aſleep. Not a Gale ſtirs. Even the downy Feather, hung on the Cordage, is motionleſs. The Sea ſtagnates. The Mariner is *becalmed*; and his Veſſel reels, but ſcarcely creeps.—Whereas, could I ſurvey the Straits of *Magellan*, or the Gut of *Gibraltar*, I ſhould find a very ſtriking Difference. There, the Waters pour in with Vehemence, and ruſh forwards with Impetuoſity. All is there in ſtrong Agitation, and rapid Progreſs. The Ship is *whirled* through the narrow Paſſage; and rides, as it were, on the Wheels of the Surge, or on the Wings of the Wind.

* Spout fall, which was ſixty Feet over, was tore up "to the very Rock, which was no leſs than ſeven Feet "deep; and a deep Gulph made for above half a Mile, "the Earth being raiſed on either Side in great Heaps."—What were the ſtouteſt Ship beneath ſuch a Load of falling Waters? Like an Egg-ſhell under the Weight of a Pyramid.

Wind.—This, my dear *Aspasio*, is a true Image of what I have been, and of what I am. Some Months ago, when I was insensible of Guilt, all my Prayers were listless, and all my Religion was a Kind of spiritual Lethargy. I felt not in my Heart what I uttered with my Tongue. *Hosannahs* were but an empty Ceremony, and Confessions froze on my formal Lips.—But, since the SPIRIT of GOD has awakened me from my Dream, and convinced me of my Sinfulness, I can no longer be satisfied with indolent and yawning Devotions. Trials and Temptations put strong Cries into my Mouth. My Soul mourns before the LORD; my Desires plead with the Blessed GOD: and I am ready to say, as the Patriarch of old, "I cannot, I must not, I *will not let Thee go, unless Thou bless me*."

I see no Flocks of Sheep, with sober Assiduity, nibbling the grassy Plains. No Lambs, with innocent Gaiety, and in little Parties of Pleasure, frisking along the sunny Banks. Here are no Stables for the generous Steed, nor Pastures for the lusty Heifer. Nevertheless, these watery Regions are stocked with Colonies of *proper* and *peculiar* Inhabitants.

Inhabitants! Is such a Thing possible? Can any Creature live in this suffocating Element? Can they move and act, propagate their Species, and continue from Generation to Generation; where *We*, if immersed but a few Minutes, inevitably perish?—'Tis wonderful indeed! What We could not have believed, had We not seen with our Eyes, or known by sure Experience. The Existence and History of Fishes, without the Comment of Experience,

* Gen. xxxii. 26.

perience, would have seemed a philosophical Romance; something to Imagination amusing, but in Reality impossible.—Yet, through the Almighty Power of our GOD, not only *living Creatures*, but the greatest of living Creatures, *are formed from under the Waters**. In Number countless, and in Bulk matchless. Yea, and have their Being, Life, and Health, in what We reckon the Seat of Suffocation and Death.

They are all clothed, and accoutred, in exact Conformity to the Clime. Not in swelling Wool, or buoyant Feathers; not in a flowing Robe, or a full-trimmed Suit; but with as much Compactness, and with as little Superfluity, as possible. They are clad, or rather *sheathed* in *Scales*. Which adhere closely to their Bodies, and are always laid in a Kind of natural Oil. Than which Apparel nothing can be more *light*; at the same Time nothing more *solid*, and nothing so *smooth*. It hinders the Fluid from penetrating their Flesh; it prevents the Cold

* Job xxvi. 5. It is said in our Translation, *Dead Things are formed from under the Waters*. But, I think it is said very improperly. The Word is רפאים. Which signifies *Giganter*, *Gianis*; vast Creatures; of prodigious Size; in their enormous Bulk, exceeding the Animals, produced on the dry Land, as much as the Children of *Anak*, or *Goliath* of *Gath*, exceeded in Stature the ordinary Sons of Men.

This seems to be the Sense of the Passage. And it is a Sense extremely proper; as it expresses a grand Peculiarity, distinguishing the aquatic Animals. A Peculiarity, on which it was both obvious and judicious, for the sacred Writer to touch; and which, I believe, first strikes our Attention, whenever We contemplate the Natives of the Deep. *There is that Leviathan*, of most stupendous Magnitude, was the first great Observable in the Psalmist's Survey.

Cold from coagulating their Blood; and enables them to make their Way through the Waters with the utmost Facility. If, in their rapid Progress, they strike against any hard Substance, this their scaly Doublet breaks the Force of the Blow; and effectually secures them, from Casualties, at least from Harm.

Their *Shape* is slender and tapering; fitted to divide the Waters, and to traverse, with the least Obstruction, a very resisting Medium.—Their *Tail* is extremely flexible. It consists of vigorous Muscles, and acts with uncommon Agility. By its alternate Impulse, it causes a progressive Motion; and by repeated Strokes, it darts the whole Body to any Distance.—They have each a curious *Instrument* *, by which they increase or diminish their specific Gravity; sink like Lead, or float like a Cork; rise to what Height, or descend to what Depth, they please.—Where-ever I turn my View, I perceive a *Wisdom*, perpetually fruitful of new Designs; a *Power*, completely executing whatever is projected; a *Goodness*, still, still communicating Comfort and Happiness—communicating them, in various, unsuspected, innumerable Ways—Nay, communicating them, both, by what is withheld, and by what is imparted! As these Creatures have, probably, no Occasion for the Sense of *Hearing*; as the Impressions of Sound have very little, if any, Existence in their Habitation; to have given them the usual Furniture of Ears, would have been an Incumbrance, rather than a Benefit.

This is the Abode of *Leviathan*, hugest of living Creatures. Before whom the broad-limbed Elephant,

* The Air Bladder.

phant, and the tall-necked Camel, are mere Shrimps. A ſtretched-out Promontory, when He ſleeps; a moving Iſland, when He ſwims; "making the Sea "to boil like a Pot," when, unweildily wallowing, He takes his prodigious Paſtime.—Here, the voracious *Shark*, that Aſſaſſin of the finny Nations, roams and commits his Ravages: imbrues his horrid Fangs, and marks his rapid Path, with Blood.—Here dwelt that *great*, and greatly ſurpriſing *Fiſh*, whoſe Fierceneſs and Avidity the Almighty SOVEREIGN employed as his Purſuivant, to arreſt a fugitive Prophet. Whoſe ample Jaws, or capacious Entrails, were the Dungeon to confine a rebellious Subject, and the Cabin to lodge a penitent Offender. Whoſe Bulk and Strength and Speed were a kind of Veſſel, tranſporting this Convict to *the Bottoms of the Mountains, and the Bars of the Earth*.* After the Criminal was ſufficiently chaſtiſed, and properly humbled, they ſerved as a Galley with Oars, to convey Him ſafe to Land.

In the ſame Element reſides, (at leaſt takes up Part of his Reſidence) that formidable Monſter, who is made without Fear; and *has not his Like upon Earth*. He eſteemeth the pointed Iron as Straw, and ponderous Braſs as rotten Wood. His Heart is as hard as a Piece of nether Millſtone, and his Scales are a Coat of impenetrable Mail. Strength not to be reſiſted, much leſs to be ſubdued, lies intrenched in his ſinewy Neck. His Eyes are like the Eyelids of the opening Day; and when He rolls thoſe glaring Orbs, there ſeems to be another Morn riſen on Mid-noon. His Teeth are terrible, jagged for Rapine, and edged with Death. His

* Jonah ii. 5.

His Throat is as a burning Furnace; Clouds of Smoke are poured from his Nostrils, and Flakes of Fire issue from his Mouth. None, no not the most resolute, dares provoke Him to the Combat, or even stir him up from his Slumbers. He laugheth at the shaking of the Spear, and *Sorrow marcheth in Triumph before Him* *. Whenever He raiseth Himself, the Mighty are afraid; where-ever He advanceth, Ruin is there.—If a mere Creature is capable of spreading such Alarm and Dread; how *greatly* is the CREATOR himself to be feared! Who can turn the most harmless Inhabitant of the Ocean, into a ravenous Alligator, or a horrid Crocodile! Who can arm every Reptile of the Ground, with all the Force and Rage of a Lion!

'Tis impossible to enter on the Muster-roll, those scaly Herds, and that minuter Fry, which graze the Sea-weed, or stray through the coral Groves. They are innumerable, as the Sands which lie under them; countless, as the Waves which cover them.—Here

* *Job* xli. 22. לפניו תדוץ דאבה *Mæror*, says *Bochart*, *præcedit tanquam Metator & Comes, tumidique Anteambulo Regis.* Terror and Anguish are a kind of *advanced Guard* to this Monarch among the Reptiles. Or they go before the Monster, as the Man bearing a Shield went before the *Philistine* Giant.—The original Word occurs in no other Part of the divine Book. I cannot recollect any Expression, which so fully represents its Meaning, as *Homer*'s κυδιοων, or *Xenophon*'s γαυριασθαι; both which are intended to describe the Ardour and Action of a high-mettled prancing Steed.—The whole Paragraph is a Sketch of the *Crocadile*'s Picture. It exhibits a few Circumstances, culled from that inimitable Description, extant in the Book of *Job*. Which are given, either in the sacred Writer's *own* Words, or else in a *paraphrastic* Explanation of their Sense.

are uncouth Animals, of *monstrous* Shapes *, and *amazing* Qualities †. Some, that have been discovered

* *Monstrous Shapes*.—Such as the *Sword-fish*; whose upper Jaw is lengthened into a strong and sharp Sword. With which He sometimes ventures to attack the Ships, though armed with Thunder; and is capable of piercing their Sides, though ribbed with Oak. This may be called the *Champion* of the Waters. Who, though never exceeding sixteen Feet in Length, yet confiding in a Weapon at once so trusty and so tremendous, scruples not to give Battle even to the Whale Himself.—The *Sea-Hog* has no Tail; seems to be all Head; and was it not for two Fins, which act the Part of Oars, would be one intire round Mass of Flesh.—The *Polypus*, remarkable for its numerous Feet, and as many Claws; by which it has the Appearance of a mere Insect, and seems fitted only to crawl. At the same Time, an Excrescence arising on the Back, enables it to steer and pursue a steady Course in the Waves. So that it may pass under the two-fold Character of a *Sailor* and a *Reptile*.

† *Amazing Qualities*.—Among these may be reckoned the *Torpedo*, which benumbs on a sudden, and renders impotent, whatever Fish it assaults. And, which is yet more extraordinary, strikes even the Fisherman's Arm, when He offers to lay hold on it, with a temporary Deadness. By this means, it possesses the double Advantage, of arresting its Prey, and securing itself.—The *Cuttle-fish*, furnished with a liquid Magazine, of a Colour and Consistence like Ink. Which, when pursued by an Enemy, the Creature emits, and blackens the Water. By this Artifice, the Foe is bewildered in the Chace; and while the One vainly gropes in the Dark, the Other seizes the Opportunity, and makes his Escape.—The *Nautilus*, whose Shell forms a natural Boat. The dexterous Inhabitant unfurls a Membrane to the Wind, which serves him instead of a Sail. He extends also a Couple of Arms, with which, as with two slender Oars, He rows Himself along. When he is disposed to retire or quit the Recess, He strikes Sail; and, without any Apprehension of being drowned, sinks to the Bottom. When the Weather is calm, and He has an Inclination to see

the

covered by the inquisitive Eye of Man; and many more, that remain among the Secrets of the hoary Deep.—Here are Sholes and Sholes, of various Characters, and of the most diversified Sizes; from the *gigantic* Whale, whose Flouncings "tem-"pest the Ocean," to the *evanescent* Anchovy; whose Substance dissolves in the smallest Fircasee.—Some, lodged in their pearly Shells, and fattening on their rocky Beds, seem attentive to no higher Employ, than that of imbibing moist Nutriment. These, but a small Remove from vegetable Life, are almost rooted to the Rocks, on which they lie reposed. While others, active as the winged Creation, and swift as an Arrow from the *Indian* Bow, shoot along the yielding Flood, and range at large the spacious Regions of the Deep.

the World, or take his Pleasure. He mounts to the Surface; and, self-taught in the Art of Navigation, performs his Voyage without either Chart or Compass: is Himself the *Vessel*, the *Rigging*, and the *Pilot*.—The *Polypus*, mentioned in the preceding Note, whose Method of producing its Young, is very singular, and very wonderful. The young One issues from the Side of its Parent, in the Form of a small Pimple, Which, lengthening and enlarging continually, becomes, in the Space of two Days, a perfect Animal; and drops from its Parent, to shift for itself. If this be wonderful, the Power of reproducing and multiplying itself, by that very Circumstance which destroys other Creatures, is incomparably more so. We are assured, from undoubted Authority, that this Insect, when cut into a Number of separate Pieces, becomes so many distinct and separate Insects. Each Piece forming itself into a Head, a Tail, and all the other Organs, which are necessary for the Existence and Preservation of animal Life. A Property this, absolutely unaccountable! A Process of Operation, tho' in Reality *natural*, yet to our Apprehension *miraculous!*

Here is the *Tortoiſe*, who never moves but under her own portable Pent-houſe. The *Lobſter*, which, whether She ſleeps or wakes, is ſtill in a State of Defence, and clad in jointed Armour. The *Oyſter*, a ſort of living Jelly, ingarriſoned in a Bulwark of native Stone. With many other Kinds of Sea Reptiles, or as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Things creeping innumerable*.—I am ſurpriſed at the Variety of their Figure, and charmed with the Splendor of their Colours. Unſearchable is the Wiſdom, and endleſs the Contrivance, of the All-creating GOD!—Some are rugged in their Form; clumſy in their Gait; and little better than hideous in their Aſpect. Their Shells ſeem to be the Production of a diſorderly Jumble, rather than the Effects of Skill and Deſign. Yet We ſhall find, even in theſe *ſeeming* Irregularities, the *niceſt* Diſpoſitions. Theſe Abodes, uncouth as they may appear, are adapted to the Genius of their reſpective Tenants; are exactly ſuited to their particular Exigencies. Neither the *Ionic* Delicacy, nor the *Corinthian* Richneſs, nor any other Order of Architecture, would have ſerved their Purpoſes half ſo well, as this coarſe and homely Fabric.

Some on the other Hand, are extremely neat. Their Structure is all Symmetry and Elegance. No Enamel in the World is comparable to their Poliſh. There is not a *Room* of *State*, in all the Palaces of *Europe*, ſo brilliantly adorned, as the Dining-room and the Bed-chamber of the little Fiſh, that dwells in *Mother of Pearl*. Such a lovely Mixture of Red, and Blue, and Green, ſo delightfully ſtaining the moſt clear and glittering Ground, is no where elſe to be ſeen. The royal Power may covet it, and human

man Art may mimic it; but neither the one, nor the other, nor both united, will ever be able to equal it.

But what I admire more, than all their Streaks and their Spots, more than all their regular, or romantic Shapes, is, The extraordinary Provision made for their *Safety*.—Nothing is more reliſhing and palatable than their Fleſh. Nothing more heavy and ſluggiſh than their Motions. As they have no Speed to eſcape, neither have they any Dexterity to elude the Foe. Were they naked or unguarded, they muſt be an eaſy Prey to every Free-booter, that roams the Ocean.—To prevent this fatal Conſequence, what is only Clothing to other Animals, is to them a *Clothing*, a *Houſe*, and a *Caſtle*. They have a Fortification, that grows with their Growth, and is a Part of themſelves. By this means, they live ſecure amidſt Millions and Millions of ravenous Jaws. By this means, they are *impurked*, as it were, in their own Shell; and, ſcreened from every other Aſſault, are reſerved for the Uſe and Pleaſure of Mankind.

This is the Birth-place of *Cod*, the ſtanding Repaſt of Lent. This is the Nurſery of *Turbot*, for its exquiſite Reliſh juſtly ſtyled, The Pheaſant of the Waters. Hence comes the *Sturgeon*, delicious even in Pickle, and a Regale for royal Luxury: Hence the *Flounder*, dappled with reddiſh Spots*, and

* Here is the Appearance of a Miſtake: Not the Flounder, I apprehend, but the *Plaice*, is dappled with reddiſh Spots: Yet ſo very trivial is the Miſtake, that to remark it might be deemed a Piece of refined Impertinence, did I not make ſome Amends by the following Obſervation. With which, I dare promiſe myſelf, the Reader will not be diſpleaſed. Eſpecially, as it exhibits

and a Supply for vulgar Wants.—Here dwell the *Mackarel*, decked, when hailed from their native Element, richly decked with the moſt glofſy Dies: the *Herring*, whoſe Back is motled with Azure, and his Belly ſleek with Silver: the *Salmon*, in plainer Habit, but of larger Subſtance, and higher Eſteem, than either or both the preceding.—Theſe, when ſhotten and lean, wander wildly up and down the vaſt Abyſs. When *plump* and *delicate*, they throng our Creeks, and ſwarm in our Bays: they repair to the Shallows, or haunt the running Streams.—

Who

a very ſignal Inſtance of GOD Almighty's indulgent Goodneſs even to the meaneſt of his Creation, and alters the general Method of his Proceeding, whenever it is requiſite, for the Benefit or the Comfort of any Animal.

The Flounder, the Plaice, the Sole, and almoſt all the *flat* Fiſh, are white on the under Side, while their upper Side is tinctured with darkiſh Brown. By this Variation, they are not only rendered curious and beautiful, but on that Part which preſents itſelf to the Spectator, they reſemble the Colour of Mud. If You aſk what is the Importance, what the Advantage, of ſuch a Reſemblance? Great. For, as the Creatures generally hover or float about the Mud, they are, by this Means, more eaſily concealed, and more frequently eſcape their Enemies.

What is ſtill more remarkable; Providence, which has given to other Fiſhes an Eye on each Side of the Head, has, in this Species, placed *both* the Eyes on the *ſame* Side. Moſt nicely is this peculiar Regulation ſuited to the Peculiarity of their Condition. They ſwim but little, and always with their white Side downwards. Here therefore the Power of Seeing would ſcarcely be of any Service. Whereas, on the oppoſite Part of their Body, they have need of the quickeſt Sight, for their continual Preſervation.—Admirable Diſpoſition! Where nothing is to be feared, the uſual Guard is withdrawn. Where Danger threatens, there the Guard is not only placed, but doubled!

Who bids these Creatures evacuate the Shores, and disperse themselves into all Quarters, when they become worthless and unfit for our Service? Who rallies and recals the undisciplined Vagrants, as soon as they are improved into desirable Food? Who appoints the very Scene of our Ambushes, to be the Place of their Rendezvous? So that they come like Volunteers to our Nets?—Surely, the Furlow is signed, the Summons issued, and the Point of Reunion settled, by a Providence ever indulgent to Mankind; ever studious to treat Us with Dainties, and *load Us with Benefits* *.

We have wondered at † our *SAVIOUR*'s Penetration and Power—his *Penetration*, which, though the Sea was at a Distance, and Walls intervened, discerned the Fish, that had just swallowed a Piece of Money—his *Power*, which, without any Delay ‡, brought the lawless Rambler, charged with the silver Spoil, to *Peter*'s Hook. But is it not equally wonderful, to observe such innumerable Multitudes of finny Visitants, annually heaving our Friths, and crouding upon our Shores? Making this welcome Approach, at the most proper Periods of the Year, and in an orderly Succession of one Species to another. All which furnish our Tables with a wholesome and delicate *Repast*; at the same Time, that they yield to our Nation a *Revenue* ‖, more certain, and no less considerable, than the Mines of *Peru*.

* Psal. lxviii. 19. † See *Letter* VIII. p. 96.

‡ *Without any Delay*—For the Directions to *Peter* are, *Take the Fish that first cometh up.*

‖ We are told, That the Banks of *Newfoundland* alone, bring in to the Proprietors of that Fishery, a Revenue of several Millions every Year.—And they will, in all Probability, be an unimpaired Resource of Treasure, when the richest Mines now worked in the World, are choked up or exhausted.

These approach, while those of *enormous* Size and *tremendous* Appearance abandon the Shores. The latter might indanger the Fisherman's Safety, and would certainly scare away the valuable Fish from our Coasts. They are therefore restrained by an invisible Hand, and abscond in the Abysses of the Ocean. Just as the wild Beasts of the Earth, impelled by the same over-ruling Power, hide themselves in the Recesses of the Forest.—A Ship, infected with a pestilential Distemper, is obliged to keep off at Sea; and not permitted to enter the Port, till she has performed her *Quarantine*. In like manner, these Monsters of the Deep, whose very Business is Destruction, are laid under a providential Interdict. Only with this desirable Difference, that, as their Presence would always be pernicious; they are never suffered to come near. Their Quarantine is *perpetual*.

*Ask now the Beasts, and they shall teach Thee; and the Fowls of the Air, and they shall tell Thee: or speak to the Earth, and it shall teach Thee**; *and the Fishes of the Sea shall declare unto Thee.*—That the LORD is *gracious*.—That his tender Mercies are over all his Works—That to *Us* He is superabundantly and profusely good. Having ordered all Things in the Surges of the Ocean, as well as on the Surface of the Ground, for our rich Accommodation, and for our greatest Advantage.

One Circumstance, relating to the Natives of the Deep, is very peculiar, and no less astonishing.

As

* *Job* xii. 7, 8. The *Earth* is represented, as bearing witness to the immense Benignity of the blessed GOD. Some *Minutes*, or a short *Abstract*, of her Testimony on this Occasion, may be seen in *Letter* VI.

As they neither sow nor reap, have neither the Produce of the Hedges, nor the Gleanings of the Field; they are obliged to *plunder* and *devour* one another, for necessary Subsistence. They are a kind of licensed Banditti, that make Violence and Murder *, their professed Trade.—By this means, prodigious Devastations ensue; and, without proper, without very *extraordinary Recruits*, the whole Race must continually dwindle, and at length be totally extinct.—Were they to bring forth, like the most prolific of our terrestrial Animals, a Dozen only, or a Score at each Birth; the Increase would be unspeakably too small for the Consumption. The weaker Species would be destroyed by the stronger; and, in Time, the stronger must perish, even by their successful Endeavours to maintain themselves.—Therefore, to supply Millions of Assassins with their Prey, and Millions of Tables with their Food, yet not to depopulate the watery Realms; the Issue produced by every Breeder is almost incredible. They spawn, not by Scores or Hundreds, but by Thousands and by Millions †. A *single* Mother is pregnant with a *Nation*. By

which

* To this, I believe, the Prophet alludes, in that remarkable Expression; *Thou makest Men as the Fishes of the Sea.* Thou sufferest Men to commit, without Restraint or Controul, all Manner of Outrages. What should be a civil Community, is a Scene of Oppression. The Weakest are a Prey to the Strongest, and every One seeks the Destruction of his Neighbour. *Habak.* i. 14.

† Mr. *Petit* found 342,144 Eggs in the hard Roe of a Carp, sixteen Inches long. Mr. *Leuwenhoeck* counted, in a Cod of an ordinary Size, 9,384,000 Eggs.—A Fecundity perfectly amazing! But admirably adapted to the pressing Exigencies of the watery World; admirably contrived

which amazing, but most needful Expedient, a periodical Reparation is made, proportionable to the immense Havock.

How welcome this Reparation is, and how very serviceable, let those forlorn People acknowledge, who dwell under the *northern Pole*. Their Wants are few, and their Desires moderate. Yet moderate as their Desires are, they receive no Supply from the Orchard or the Furrow. Instead of Acres waving with yellow Grain, or Trees bending with ruddy Fruit, their Fields are frozen to Iron, and buried under Mountains of Snow.—Since the Earth denies them her usual Succours, the Sea takes them under her parental Care. Even the wild tempestuous Ocean, seems to pity those poor Outcasts; and opens to them her Hand, or (if you please) administers to them her Teats. 'Tis said of the Founder of *Rome* *, that, when a helpless and exposed Infant, He was suckled by a ravenous Wolf. 'Tis certain, that the Natives of *Greenland* and *Zembla*, being abandoned by their common Mother, are nourished by the howling Billows.—These furnish them with Plenty of Fish: whose Bones yield Timber for their Huts, and Utensils for their Families; while the Oil and the Flesh, afford a warming Liquor, and a fattening Food, for their Meals. Which are to them, a much better

contrived for the Benefit and Delight of Mankind!—If we advert to this Peculiarity, it will give the utmost Emphasis to the Patriarch's *metaphorical* Expression, and an inimitable Beauty to his *prophetic* Wish, ידגו לרב *Let these* my Grandsons *grow into a Multitude*; or, which is more exactly answerable to the Original, *let them multiply abundantly, even like the Fishes of the Ocean*, Gen. xlviii. 16.

* *Romulus.*

ter Sustenance, more suitable to their Constitution, and Clime, than the Sallads of the Garden, or the Sheaves of the Harvest.—Thus does a gracious Providence give to all, even the most destitute of Men, not only their daily Bread, but the Bread which is most *proper* for their State *; is best adapted to preserve them in Health, in Vigour, and Chearfulness.

As the Sea is peopled with animated Inhabitants, it is also variegated with *vegetable* Productions. Some, soft as Wool; others, hard as Stone. Some rise, like a leafless Shrub; some are expanded, in the Form of a Net; some grow with their Heads downward, and seem to be hanging on, rather than springing from, the Juttings of the Rocks. These may, with much greater Propriety, than the famous Plantations of *Semiramis*, be called *pensile* Gardens. These—But, methinks, I hear the Check of inspired Wisdom; *Hast Thou entered into the Springs of the Sea? Or hast Thou walked in the Search of the Depth* †? A just Reproof! As my Walk reached no farther than barely the Purlieus of the Ocean; as neither You nor I have ever taken a single Turn among those submarine Groves; as *Moses*, *Joshua*, and *Jonah*, the only Writers that ever

* This seems to be the Import of επιουσιον, in the fourth Petition of the LORD's Prayer. *Daily* Bread, in Connection with the preceding Clause, (*this Day*) reads flat, and appears superfluous. But the Sentiment is weighty, and the Request very needful, if We understand the Word as *Suidas* has explained its Etymology, Οικεῖον ἡμῶν ἀρμόζων; or as *Agur* has expressed its Meaning, *Feed me with Food convenient for me*. Prov. xxx. 8.

† Job xxxviii. 16.

ever made the wonderful Tour, intent upon *more important* Themes, have left Us no Memoirs relating to this curious Point; I shall not venture to advance any thing particular on the Subject. Only one Remark I would offer in general—

The Herbs and Trees, ſubſiſting on the Land, are nouriſhed by the Juices, which permeate the Soil, and fluctuate in the Air. For this Purpoſe, they are furniſhed with *Leaves*, to collect the one; and with *Roots* to attract the other. Whereas, the Sea-plants, finding ſufficient Nouriſhment in the ſurrounding Waters, have no Occaſion to detach a Party of Roots into the Ground, and forage the Earth for Suſtenance. Inſtead therefore of *penetrating*, they are but juſt *tacked* to the Bottom; and adhere to ſome ſolid Subſtance, only with ſuch a Degree of Tenacity, as may ſecure them from being toſſed to and fro, by the random Agitation of the Waves.

We ſee from this, and numberleſs other Inſtances, what a *Diverſity* there is, in the Operations of the great CREATOR's Hand. Yet every Alteration is an Improvement, and each new Pattern has a *peculiar Fitneſs* of its own.—The ſame Oeconomy takes place, ſuch a Difference of Adminiſtration I mean, in his Government of the rational World. In "chooſing an Heritage for his People," and aſſigning a Condition to each of his Servants, there is a great Variety with reſpect to Individuals; yet a perfect Uniformity, and complete Harmony, with reſpect to the Whole.—Some He calls out to a Courſe of diſtinguiſhed Labours. They make an illuſtrious Figure in Life, and appear *as a City ſet*

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on an * *Hill!* Others He consigns over to Obscurity. They are like the Prophets, whom good *Obadiah* hid in a Cave, and are styled *his secret Ones* †. *Those*, the Cedars, which stand conspicuous on the Top of *Lebanon*; *these*, the Violets, which lie concealed at the Foot of a Briar.

St. *Paul* was eminently qualified for busy Scenes, and the most extensive Services. He is introduced, therefore, into Places of Concourse. His Ministry lies amidst the most renowned and populous Cities. Even his *Imprisonment* at *Rome*, seems to have been a providential Expedient for fixing Him, as it were, on the *Stage* of public Observation, and in the very *Center* of universal Intelligence. Where, his Preaching was like plunging a Stone into the Midst of a smooth Canal; which not only affects the neighbouring Parts of the Surface, but spreads the floating Circles over all the wide Expanse ‡.—Whereas, the beloved *John*, being less fitted to bustle among a Crowd, is sent into the unfrequented *solitary* Island; there to indulge the Flights of heavenly Contemplation; and receive, with uninterrupted Attention, the mysterious Visions of GOD.—*Job* shall have Thorns in his Path; have the Dunghil for his Seat; and be exposed, as a Mark to all the Arrows of Tribulation. *Solomon* shall dip his Foot in Oil; shall be elevated on the Throne

* Matt. v. 14. † Psal. lxxxiii. 3.

‡ Therefore the Apostle, speaking of his Abode and his Preaching at *Rome*, has these very emphatical Words; *That all the Gentiles might hear.* 2 Tim. iv. 17. which, considered in the preceding Light, have a peculiar Propriety. Because, to *Rome* they repaired from all Quarters; and from thence they returned, into all Parts of the known World.

Throne of Royalty; and surrounded with the most lavish Careſſes of Heaven.

In all this ſeeming, this more than ſeeming Contrariety, there is a Diſplay, not only of ſovereign Authority, but of conſummate Benignity and Wiſdom.—The great HEAD of the Church, acts like a judicious *General*; and appoints ſuch a Station to each of his Soldiers, as correſponds with the Abilty He gives. He acts like the moſt ſkilful *Phyſician*; and preſcribes ſuch a Remedy for all his Patients, as is moſt nicely ſuited to their reſpective Caſes. He knows the preciſe Point of Time, the particular Place of Abode, the peculiar Circumſtances of Condition, which are moſt exactly proper for each and every of his Children; and, like a tender as well as unerring *Father*; what He knows to be beſt, that He conſtantly allots.—I ſaid, like a General, like a Phyſician, like a Father. But the Compariſon is low; the Language is inexpreſſive; *CHRIST* is all that is implied in theſe Relations, and unſpeakably *more*—O! that We may rejoice in the Superintendency of ſuch a SAVIOUR; and not only reſign Ourſelves to his Will, but *thank* Him for managing the Helm. *Thank* Him for ſteering our Courſe, through the Changes of the preſent Hour, and all the Uncertainties of Futurity. Since, whatever our froward and petulant Paſſions may ſuggeſt, The LORD's Ways are ſo far from being unequal, that they have all poſſible Fitneſs and Propriety; they are ordered "in Number, Weight, "and Meaſure."

All is ſo very different from the Proſpects, which lately preſented themſelves, that I can hardly forbear

bers asking, Whether I am not translated into a *new World?*—Where are the fruitful Vales, garnished and enriched with the GREAT O R's Bounty? Where are the branching Groves, vocal and harmonious with their MAKER's Praise? No cultured Field, no opening Blossom, not so much as a green Leaf appears. None of my late Entertainments remain, only the cooling Zephyrs. Which seem no longer perfumed with the *Breath* of Flowers, but impregnated with the *Freshness* of the Ocean. Yet, though all those lovely Landscapes are withdrawn; though the gurgling Fountain is silenced, and the blooming Garden lost: I am not far from the Origin, both of the Odours, which exhale from the one; and of the Crystal, which flows from the other. I am now upon the Margin of that *grand Reservoir*, which supplies the Country with its Fertility, and the Parterre with its Beauty *. The Sea is the inexhaustible Cistern of the Universe. The Air and Sun constitute the mighty *Engine*, which works without Intermission, to raise the liquid Treasure. While the Clouds serve as so many *Aqueducts*, to convey the genial Stores along the Atmosphere; and distribute them at seasonable Periods, and in regular Proportions, through all the Regions of the Globe.

I question, whether the united Application of Mankind could, with their utmost Skill, and with all

* *Pliny* supposes a Query made; *Si quis velit reputare, ut Fruges gignatur, Arbores Fruticesque vivant.* To which He gives the following Solution; *In Cœlum Aquas migrare, Animamque etiam Herbis vitalem inde deterre.* And from thence concludes; *Omnes Terræ quoque Vires Aquarum esse Beneficii.*

all poſſible Percolations, fetch a ſingle Drop of *perfectly* ſweet Water *, from this unmeaſurable Pit of Brine. Yet the Action of the ſolar Heat draws off, every Hour, every Minute, Millions and Millions of Tons, in vaporous Exhalations †. Which, being ſkillfully parceled out, and ſecurely lodged in *the Bottles of Heaven* ‡; are ſent abroad, ſweetened and refined, without any brackiſh Tincture, or the leaſt bituminous Sediment.—Sent abroad upon the Wings of the Wind, to diſtil in Dews, or pour themſelves in Rain; to ooze from the Oriſices of Fountains;

* I have not forgotten, what was lately affirmed in our public Papers; That a certain ingenious Gentleman, I think in the City of *Durham*, had found out the Art of *ſweetening* Sea-water.—What he produced, might probably approve itſelf to the Taſte, and not be without its Uſefulneſs. Yet I cannot but query, whether it will be found to have all thoſe fine, balmy, ſalutiferous Qualities, which diſtinguiſh and recommended the *Rain-Water*. Which has been exhaled by the kindly Warmth of the Sun; has been filtrated by paſſing and repaſſing through the Regions of the Air; has been clarified in the higheſt and pureſt Tracts of the Atmoſphere; has been farther refined, and quite perfected, by the ſearching Agency of the Winds.—I would not attempt to depreciate any valuable Invention; yet I ſhould very much wonder, if the *puny* Alembec could equal this *grand* Apparatus of Nature.

† It is ſuppoſed, that from the *Mediterranean* Sea alone, there ariſes, in vaporous Exhalations, more than five thouſand Millions of Tons, within the Space of one Summer-Day. Yet the *Mediterranean* Sea bears no more Proportion to the whole Extent of the Ocean, than a public Road bears to the Dimenſions of a County, through which it Leads.

‡ So the Clouds are *elegantly* ſtyled in ſacred Writ, *Job* xxxviii. 37.

Fountains*; to trickle along the Veins of Rivulets; to rise in the Cavities of Wells; to roll, in many a headlong Torrent, from the Sides of Mountains; to flow, in copious Streams, amidst the Bosom of burning Deserts, and through the Heart of populous Kingdoms. In order to refresh and fertilize, to beautify and enrich, every Soil, in every Clime.

How amiable is the Goodness, and how amazing is the Power, of the World's Adorable MAKER! —How *amiable his Goodness!* in distributing so largely, what is absolutely necessary, and exceedingly beneficial. That Water, without which We can scarce perform any Business, or enjoy any Comfort, should be every One's Property. Should spring up from the Soil; should drop down from the Clouds; should stream by our Houses; should take a Journey, from the Ends of the Earth, and the Extremities of the Ocean, on purpose to serve Us.—How *amazing his Power!* That a boundless Mass of fluid Salt, intolerably nauseous to the human Taste, should be the original Spring, which deals out every palatable Draught to Mankind, and quenches the Thirst of every Animal! Doubtless, the Power by which *this* is effected, can extract Comfort from our Afflictions, Advantage from our

* We are obliged to *Clemens Romanus*, for the most just and delicate Representation of Fountains and their Usefulness, that perhaps any where exists. Αἰνίσσει τε πηγαὶ πρὸς ἀπολαυσιν καὶ υἱεσιαν δημιουργηθεισαι, διχα ἐλλειψεως παρεχοῦσαι τους πρὸς ζωην ανθρωποις μαζους, 1 Epist. ad *Corinth.* He calls *Fountains*, the *Breasts* or *Teats* of the Earth. The Comparison, I believe, is his own: and nothing can exceed it, as to Propriety and Beauty.

Calamities, and *make all Things work together for our Good* *.

Vaſt and various are the Advantages †, which We derive from the liquid Element: *vaſt*, as its unbounded Extent; *various*, as its ever-mutable Surface.—The ſweet Waters glide along the Earth, in ſpacious and ſportive Currents. With their humid Train, their exhaling Moiſture, and their gay Appearance, they enliven and exhilarate the adjacent Country. While Plenty follows, where-ever they flow.—By giving a continual Shake to the circumambient Air, they prevent its Stagnation; they diſperſe their own Vapours; and promote the Purity of their Siſter-Element. Indeed, theſe watery Ramblers impart much the ſame Improvement to the Air, the Proſpect, the whole Scene, as Vivacity and Chearfulneſs add to the Temper of their rational Inhabitants.

Theſe circulating Floods paſs by opulent Cities, and receiving all their Filth, rid them of a thouſand Nuiſances. Which, when once committed to

* Rom. viii. 28.

† The high *Value* which Mankind ſet upon this Element, and the many *Benefits* they receive from its Miniſtration, both theſe Particulars are very ſtrongly expreſſed by the *Hebrews*. Who call a Pool or Reſervoir of Water ברכה; which denotes, in its primary Signification, *a Bleſſing*, Cant. vii. 4. Iſai. vii. 3.—We too ſeldom think, and indeed we can never fully underſtand, what ſignal Mercies we enjoy, in the *moſt common* Gifts of PROVIDENCE. Was Water alone with-held, the moſt populous Clime would be without Inhabitants, and the moſt delicious Spot would degenerate into a Deſart! In Alluſion to this, our LORD calls the Wilderneſs and the ſolitary Land *dry Places*. Ανυδρων τοπων, *Matt.* xii. 43.

to these *fluid Scavengers* are as effectually secreted, as if they were buried at the very Center of the Earth.—Yet, though they condescend to so mean an Employ, they are fitted for more honourable Services. They enter the Gardens of a Prince, and compose some of the most delightful Ornaments of the Place. They glitter upon the Eye, as they float in the ample *Canal*. They amuse the Imagination, as they ascend in curious *Jet d'Eaus*. They yield a nobler Entertainment, as, forming themselves into Sheets of sloping Silver, they fall in graceful or in grand *Cascades*.—If, instead of Beautifiers, We think proper to make use of them as *Drudges*, they ply at our Mills; they toil incessantly at the Wheel; and, by working the hugest Engines, rid Us of Abundance of Fatigue, and save Us a proportionable Degree of Expence.

So forcibly they act, when *collected*; and most surprisingly they insinuate, when *detached*. They throw themselves into the Body of a Plant: they penetrate the minutest of its organized Tubes: and, subtil beyond all Expression, they find a Passage through Meanders, *too small* for the Eye to discern, *too numerous* and intricate even for Imagination to follow.—How difficultly does the Mason's Labourer, bending under the Burden of Mortar on his Head, push his Way up the Rounds of a Ladder! While these Servants in the Employ of Nature, carry their Load to a much greater Height; and climb with the utmost Ease, even without the Assistance of Steps or of Stairs. They convey the nutrimental Stores of Vegetation, from the *lowest Fibres* that are plunged into the Soil, to the very *topmost Twigs* that wave amidst the Clouds. They are the Caterers

for the vegetable World *: or (if I may be allowed the Expreſſion) the *Sutlers*, which attend the whole *Hoſt* of Plants; to furniſh them with ſeaſonable Refreſhment, and neceſſary Proviſion. By means of which, *the Trees of the LORD are full of Sap, even the Cedars of Lebanon which HE hath planted* †. Notwithſtanding their prodigious Elevation, and vaſt Diffuſion; though they are abandoned by Man, and deprived of all human Cultivation; yet, not a ſingle Branch is deſtitute of Leaves, nor a ſingle Leaf of Moiſture.

Beſides the ſalutary, cleanly, and ſerviceable Circulation of the Rivers; the Sea has a Libration, no

* St. *Peter* ſeems to have hinted at this Property of the Waters, in a remarkable Paſſage; which is ſomewhat obſcured in the *Engliſh* Verſion, and therefore ſeldom underſtood by the *Engliſh* Reader. *The Earth ſtanding out of the Water and in the Water.* 2 Pet. iii. 5.—Which ſhould rather be tranſlated, *The Earth* (συνεστωσα) originally *conſtituted of, and* ſtill *ſubſiſting by Water.*—*Conſtituted of*; for *Moſes* calls the chaotic Maſs, out of which the Earth was formed, by the Name of (מים) *Waters.* Gen. i. 2.—*Subſiſting by*; for Water is, as *Theron* has obſerved, the grand Support of material Nature. That which enables her, to bring forth all her vegetable Offſpring, and to nurſe up all her animated Inhabitants. Being, in ſhort, to the terraqueous Globe, what the vital Fluid is to the human Body: or, as a Poet very elegantly ſings,

———————*The cryſtal Element,*
The chief Ingredient in Heav'n's various Works;
Whoſe flexile Genius ſparkles in the Gem,
Grows firm in Oak, and fugitive in Wine;
The Vehicle, the Source, of Nutriment
And Life, to all that vegetate or live.

See Dr. ARMSTRONG's Poem *on Health.*
A Performance as beautiful, as its Subject is deſirable.

† Pſal. civ. 16.

no leſs advantagious, and much more remarkable.—Every Day, this immenſe Collection of Waters, for the Space of five or ſix Hours, *flows* towards the Land. After a ſhort Pauſe, it *retires* again to its inmoſt Caverns; taking up nearly the ſame Interval for the Retreat, as it required for the Acceſs.—How *great* is the Power, which ſets the whole fluid World in Motion! Which protrudes to the Shores ſuch an inconceivable Weight of Waters, without any Concurrence from the Winds, frequently in direct Oppoſition to all their Force! How *gracious* alſo is the Providence, which bids the mighty Element perform its tumbling Revolutions, with all the Exactneſs of Time and Meaſure! Was it ſuffered to advance, with a lawleſs and unlimited Swell; it might ſweep over Kingdoms, and deluge whole Continents. Was it irregular and uncertain in its Approaches, Navigation would be at a Stand, and Trade become precarious.—But, being conſtant at its *ſtated Periods*, and never exceeding its *appointed* Bounds, it creates no Alarm to the Country, and affords very conſiderable Aids to Traffic.

I ſaid, *conſtant*. For at the proper Hour, or rather at the preciſely proper Minute, the Waters are ſure to be in Motion. They flow with the moſt ready Obedience, like Servants at their Maſter's Call. They croud as it were in contending Multitudes, ambitious to perform their CREATOR's Will.—Ruſhing up our large Rivers, they clear and deepen the Paſſage. In many Places, they ſpread a copious Flood, where a dry and empty Waſte lay before.

Is the Sailor returned from his Voyage, and waiting at the Mouth of the Channel? The *Flux* is ready to convey his Veſſel to the very Doors of the

Owner; and without any Hazard of ſtriking on the Rocks, or being faſtened in the Sands.—Has the Merchant freighted his Ship? Would He have it transferred to the Ocean? The *Reflux* tenders its Service; and bears away the Load, with ſingular Expedition, and with equal Safety.—Behold, O Man! How greatly thou art beloved, how *highly favoured* by thy MAKER! In what Part of his Works has he forgotten or overlooked thy Welfare? Shew me a Creature, point out a Spot; in the Formation or Diſpoſition of which, He has not been mindful of thy Intereſt? *He has made Thee to have Dominion over the Works of his Hands, and has put all Things in Subjection under thy Feet. All Sheep and Oxen; the Fowls of the Air, and the Fiſhes*; yea, and the Surges *of the Sea* *, are conducive to thy Benefit. Even theſe, wild and impetuous as they are, yield their willing Backs, to receive thy Load; and, like a tractable as well as indefatigable Beaſt of Burden, carry it to the Place, which thou ſhalt nominate.

What preſerves this vaſt Flood in a State of perpetual *Purity?* It is the univerſal Sewers, into which are diſcharged the Refuſe and Filth of the whole World. That which would defile the Land, and pollute the Air, is tranſmitted to the Ocean, and neither Miſchief nor Inconvenience enſue. Thoſe Swarms of *Locuſts*—which, while living were a Plague to *Pharaoh*, by their loathed Intruſion; and when dead, might have cauſed a more dreadful Plague, by their noiſome Stench—ſwept into the Sea, were neither peſtilential, nor offenſive. How then is this Receptacle of every Nuiſance kept clean? Why does it not contract a noxious Taint, and diffuſe

* Pſal. viii. 6, 7, 8.

diffuse Contagion far and near? Such as would render it a *Grave* to the aquatic, and *Bane* to the terreſtrial Animals?—'Tis owing, partly to its inceſſant Motion, partly to its ſaline Quality. By the One, it is ſecured from any *internal* Principle of Corruption; by the other, it works itſelf clear from every *adventitious* Defilement.

A Directory this, and a Pattern for me!—Thus may divine *Grace*, like the penetrating Power of Salt, cure the Depravity of my Heart, and rectify the Diſorders of thy Temper! Seaſon my Words, and make all my Converſation ſavoury!—Thus may a continual Courſe of *Activity*, in my ſecular and my ſacred Vocation, prevent the pernicious Effects of Indolence! Let me daily exerciſe, or be attempting to exerciſe, the Graces of Chriſtianity. Leſt Faith become feeble; leſt Hope contract Dimneſs; and Charity wax cold.

When I began my Walk, the Waters were upon the Ebb. They ſunk away from all the Strand, as an Army overpowered, though not put to Flight, withdraws from the Field. Now like the ſame Army, re-inſpirited by their Commanders, or re-inforced by an Acceſſion of Troops, they are returning, as it were, to the Charge.—Wave riſes upon Wave, and Billow rolls over Billow. Their Progreſs is ſlow, but determined and perſevering. Much of the ſmooth ſandy Area is already over-run. The Extremities of the Rocks are covered. The foamy Invaders approach nearer and nearer. Nothing can divert, nothing retard their Courſe. Though *Canutus* * himſelf was in the Way; though his royal

* Alluding to a memorable and inſtructive Story, recorded of King *Canutus*. Who, probably without having

royal Authority and ſtrict Prohibition interpoſed; nay, though all the Forces of his Kingdom were drawn up with Orders to ſtem the Torrent; this grand Detachment from the Deep would ſcorn the feeble Oppoſition; would not be checked ſo much as a ſingle Moment; but continue, ſtill continue the wide expanſive Swell, till it has reached the deſtined Point.—So, may I *always abound* in Communion with GOD, or in Beneficence to Men; reſigning one religious or charitable Employ, only to enter upon another; and be *thus* preſſing forward,

ſtill

read, had nevertheleſs thoroughly learned, that excellent Leſſon of *Horace*;

Regum timendorum in proprios Greges,
Reges in ipſos Imperium eſt Jovis.

Some of his abject and deſigning Flatterers, had the *impious Aſſurance* to tell Him, "His Power was more than "human."—To convince them of their Folly, and rebuke them for their Falſhood, He ordered his Chair of State to be placed on the Extremity of the Shore, juſt as the Tide began to flow. Here He took his Seat, in the Preſence of the *Paraſites*, and many other Attendants. Then with all that Dignity of Air, and Severity of Accent, which ſovereign Authority knows how to aſſume, He ſaid—"Thou Sea, the Land on which I ſit is mine; "nor has any One dared to invade my Rights, or diſobey "my Commands, without ſuffering the deſerved Puniſh"ment. I charge Thee, therefore, on Pain of my higheſt "Diſpleaſure, not to enter theſe Territories, nor touch "the Feet of *England*'s Monarch."

When the rude Waves made bold to enter on the forbidden Ground; nay, when thoſe uncourtly Things preſumed to ruſh upon the royal Seat, and even to daſh his Majeſty's Perſon; He ſtarted from his Throne, and bid every Beholder obſerve the *Impotence* of earthly Kings. Bid them remember, That HE alone is worthy of the Name, whom Winds and Waves and univerſal Nature obey.

ſtill preſſing forward, to the Prize of my high calling in *CHRIST JESUS*.—Differing from thoſe regular Viciſſitudes of the Ocean, only in one Particular; That *my* Endeavours never ebb, *my* Soul never draws back. Since this would be, if *temporary*, to my grievous Loſs; if *final*, to my aggravated Perdition.

The Tide is, now, at its Height. The ſpacious ſandy Plain, on which I lately walked is quite overflowed. A Tract, almoſt unmeaſurable, is taken from our Feet, and hid from our Eyes. A thouſand Figures, and a thouſand Footſteps, imprinted on the level Beach, are eraſed. And had there been ten thouſand Times ten thouſand more, they would all have been obliterated with equal Eaſe.—How happy are they, whoſe Sins are thus covered! Whoſe Iniquities are all blotted out! And not one of their Tranſgreſſions remembered any more!—Well my Soul, be of good Comfort. Certainly the Blood of the *divine* REDEEMER, is able to do this for Thee; even for Thee, the chiefeſt of Sinners. What Guilt can be *too great*, for an infinite Atonement to expiate? What Guilt can be *ſo great*, as the Merit of an incarnate GOD? Offering the Body of his Fleſh to Death—Offering the Blood of his Heart to be ſpilt—Offering his very Soul, and his whole Perſon, through the Eternal SPIRIT, as a ſpotleſs Victim, to GOD for Us!—Can I doubt, whether this immenſely grand Propitiation, is able to do for my Conſcience, what theſe refluent Waters have done on the Margin of the Ocean? Would not this be a Diſhonour to the bleſſed *JESUS*, greater than the Laſhes of the Scourge,

Scourge, and the Crown of Thorns; viler than the Inſults, Mockery, and Spitting?

Conſider the Sea in another Capacity, and it *connects* the remoteſt Realms of the Univerſe; by facilitating an Intercourſe between their reſpective Inhabitants.—What ſhort-ſighted Beings are Mankind! How ſuperficial their Views! How unavoidable therefore their frequent Miſtakes! The Antients looked upon this bottomleſs Deep, as an *impaſſable* * Gulf. If our Forefathers were ſo egregiouſly miſtaken in this Inſtance; let not Us too peremptorily pronounce upon any difficult or myſterious Point. Leſt ſucceeding Generations, or a more inlightened State, ſhould cover Us with the double Confuſion of *childiſh* Ignorance, and *fooliſh* Conceit.

We have clearly demonſtrated, We have happily experienced, the very Reverſe of that grey-headed Surmiſe to be true. The Ocean, inſtead of being a Bar of Separation, is the great Bond of Union. For this Purpoſe, it is never exhauſted, though it ſupplies the whole Firmament with Clouds, and the whole Earth with Rains. Nor ever *overflows*, though all the Rivers in the Univerſe are perpetually augmenting its Stores, and pouring in their tributary Floods.—By means of this Element, We travel farther, than Birds of the ſtrongeſt Pinion fly; and diſcover Tracts, which the *Vulture's Eye has never ſeen* †. We make a Viſit to Nations, that lie drowned in their midnight Slumbers, when every induſtrious

* ——————*Deus abſcidit*
Prudens Oceano diſſociabili
Terras. HOR.

† Job xxviii. 7.

industrious Person on *this* Part of the Globe, is bestirring Himself in all the Hurry of Business. We cultivate an Acquaintance with the Sun-burnt *Negro*, and the shivering *Icelander*. We cross the flaming Line, We penetrate the frozen Pole, and wing our Way even round the World.

This is the great Vehicle of *Commerce*.—Not to mention the floating Castles, which contain whole Armies and their Commanders; which bear the Thunder of the Cannons, and all the dreadful Artillery of War; which are capable of demolishing Fortresses, and spreading Terror among Nations.—Let Us only contemplate the trading Vessels; how numerous! of what large Dimension! and of what prodigious Burdens! which are continually passing and repassing this universal Thoroughfare!

There go the Ships.—Ships, that are freighted, not with Sacks, but with Harvests of Corn; that carry not Pipes, but Vintages of Wine; that are laden, not with Bars of Iron, Blocks of Marble, or Wedges of Gold, but with whole Quarries of massy Stone, and whole Mines of ponderous Metal. All which, lodged in these *volatile Storehouses*, and actuated by the Breath of Heaven, are wafted to the very Ends of the Earth: wafted, enormous and unwieldly as they are, more expeditiously than the light *Berlin* bowls along the Road; almost as speedily, as the nimble-footed *Roe* bounds over the Hills *.

Astonishing

* A Ship, under a brisk and steady Gale, will sail at the Rate of 216 Miles in 24 Hours: persevering, if the Wind continues favourable, in the same rapid Career, for several Days together. A Course, which, considering both its *Swiftness* and *Duration*, cannot be equaled by the ablest

Aſtoniſhing Ordination of eternal Wiſdom! Yet moſt graciouſly contrived for the Benefit of Mankind! I can hardly ſatisfy my View, in beholding this rolling Chaos; ſtretched, ten thouſand Times farther, than my Eye can reach. I can never ceaſe my Admiration, in contemplating its amazing Properties.—That an Element, ſo *unſtable* and *fugitive*, ſhould bear up ſuch an immenſe Weight, as would bend the firmeſt Floors, or burſt the ſtrongeſt Beams!—That the *thin* and *yielding* Air ſhould drive on, with ſo much Facility and Speed, Bodies of ſuch exceſſive Bulk, as the Strength of a Legion, or an Army, would be unable to move.—That the Air and the Water, acting in Conjunction, ſhould carry to the Diſtance of many thouſand Miles, what the united Force of Men and Machines, could ſcarcely drag a ſingle Yard.—Puny and deſpicable are *our* Attempts: but great and marvelous are *thy* Works, O LORD GOD Almighty! *If thou wilt work*, ſays the Prophet, *who* or what *ſhall let it* *! Neither the Meanneſs of the Inſtrument, nor the Greatneſs of the Event. A Sling and a Stone ſhall lay the gigantic Bravo in the Duſt †. An Ox-Goad ſhall do more Execution than a Train of Artillery ‡. Even a *Worm ſhall threſh the Mountains, and beat them ſmall, and make the Hills as Chaff* ‖. GOD ALL-SUFFICIENT is his Name, and out of Weakneſs He maketh his Strength perfect.—O! that We, my dear *Aſpaſio*—that I eſpecially

ableſt Horſe, perhaps not by the nimbleſt Creature that treads the Ground.

* Iſai. xliii. 13. † 1 Sam. xvii. 50. ‡ Judg. iii. 31. ‖ Iſai. xli. 14, 15.

ally—may be ſtrong in the LORD, and in the Power of his Might! Then as the light Air is made to act with a more forcible Impulſe, than the moſt vigorous Engines; as the fluid Water is made to ſuſtain more ponderous Loads, than the moſt ſubſtantial Works of Maſonry; ſo We, who in Ourſelves are nothing but *Impotence*, ſhall be enabled to triumph over the Legions of Hell, and tread down all the Temptations of the World.

How are the Mariners conducted through this *liquid Plain*, than which nothing is more wide, and nothing more wild? Here is no Track to be followed; no Poſt of Direction to be conſulted; nor any Shepherd's Hut, where the wandering Traveler may aſk his Way. Yet the Voyage is, perhaps, no leſs than a thouſand Leagues. Are the Voyagers guided, by a Pillar of Fire in the Night, or a moveable Cloud in the Day? As the Sons of *Jacob* and *Joſeph* were eſcorted through the eaſtern Deſerts. No; but by a mean, contemptible, and otherwiſe worthleſs *Foſſil*.

The Apoſtle *James* mentions it, as a very obſervable Fact; that the *Ships, which are ſo great, and driven of fierce Winds, yet are turned about with a very ſmall Helm, whitherſoever the Governor liſteth* *. Is it not equally wonderful, that they ſhould be led through ſuch a pathleſs and unmeaſurable Waſte, by ſo ſmall an Expedient, as the Intervention of the *Loadſtone* †?—Till this ſurpriſing Mineral was diſcovered,

* Jam. iii. 4.

† I am aware, that other Expedients are uſed for ſhaping a proper Courſe on the Ocean; ſuch as making Obſervations, from the Sun and heavenly Bodies, by mathematical

covered, and its Properties were improved, Navigation lay in its Cradle. Was, at beſt, a mere Infant, which crept timorouſly along the Coaſts; was obliged to keep within ſight of the Shores; and, when once driven out beyond the narrow Sphere of her Land-marks, could neither aſcertain her Situation, nor purſue her Voyage. But this Guide—when every Beacon on the Top of the Hills, is vaniſhed from the acuteſt Ken; where nothing but Skies are ſeen above, and Seas alone appear below—*this Guide* points out the proper Paſſage. This communicates an Intelligence, which ſhines clear in the thickeſt Darkneſs, and remains ſteady in the moſt tempeſtuous Agitations. This has given, not indeed Birth, but *Maturity* to Navigation; and turned her ſwadling Bands into *Wings*. This has emboldened her to launch into the Heart of the Ocean, and enabled her to range from Pole to Pole.

A Needle touched by the Loadſtone, guided *Columbus* through the vaſt *Atlantic*, and led Him to the Diſcovery of a new World. The Direction and Advices of this ſimple Inſtrument, have opened for our Sailors a Way to both the *Indies*. And a Sea-Compaſs, which coſt, perhaps, no more than half a Crown, is the Means of conveying into our Harbours the Rarities and Riches of the Univerſe. Thus does GOD, both in the Operations of Nature, and the Adminiſtrations of Providence, accompliſh the moſt *important* Ends by the moſt *inconſiderable* Means.—When the formidable *Siſera* is

to

matical Inſtruments. But theſe, I believe, are only ſubordinate Aids to the Needle. The *grand* Regulator is the Magnet. I have heard an experienced Sailor declare; He would rather be without his *Quadrant* than without his *Compaſs*.

to be cut off, the Blow ſhall be given, not by ſome puiſſant Champion, but by the Hand of a Woman *. When *Jericho* is to be demoliſhed, thoſe impregnable Fortifications ſhall fall, not beneath the Stroke of battering Engines, but before the Sound of Rams Horns †.—When a hundred thouſand *Midianties* are to be routed, the LORD of Hoſts will gain this ſignal Victory, not by numerous Legions completely armed, but by a Handful of *Iſraelites*, accoutered only with Trumpets, Lamps, and Pitchers ‡.—Who would have thought, that from the Root of *Jeſſe*, a Root out of a dry Ground, ſhould ariſe that great Tree, which *ſtretches her Boughs unto the Sea, and her Height unto the Heavens, and her Branches unto the Ends of the Earth?* That the deſpiſed *Galilean* and the Carpenter's Son, ſhould be the SAVIOUR of the World; and the HEIR of all Things? Nay; that a Perſon humbled like the meaneſt of Slaves, and executed like the vileſt of Malefactors; nailed to a Croſs, and laid proſtrate among the Dead; that HE ſhould reſtore Life and Immortality to ruined Sinners; ſhould open the Gates of Grace and Glory on loſt Mankind? That a few *illiterate* Creatures, taken from the Barge, the Oar, and the Net, ſhould confute Philoſophers, and convert Kings; ſhould overthrow the Strong-holds of Idolatry, and plant *Chriſtianity* on its Ruins!—This is a Circumſtance, which though a Stumbling-block to ſome People, has conſiderably ſtrengthened my Faith. It is perfectly agreeable to the ALMIGHTY's Manner. It is (if I may ſo ſpeak) the diſtinguiſhing *Turn* of his Hand, and the peculiar

* Judg. iv. 9. † Joſh. vi. 5. ‡ Judg. vii. 19.

liar *Style* of his Works. Whence does He raiſe the charmingly beauteous Flower? Whence the magnificent Myriads of the Foreſt-Oaks? Whence the boundleſs and inestimable Stores of the Harveſt? From rude, from ſmall, almoſt unnoticed Seeds; from Principles, which bear not the leaſt Proportion to their Effects.—Beſides; this moſt emphatically ſpeaks THE GOD. It *ſhews the Lighting down of his glorious Arm**; and abſolutely precludes all the Pretenſions of human Arrogance, or finite Power. It appropriates the Honour to that Supreme AGENT, before whom the *Eaſy* and the *Arduous* are both alike. All Men that ſee it muſt confeſs, THIS HATH GOD DONE.

Through this Channel, are imported to our Iſland the choice Productions, and the peculiar Treaſures, of every Nation under Heaven. So that You and I can breakfaſt upon a Diſſolution of the *American* Kernel †; and ſee the rich nutrimental Liquor froth in our Cups, without ever tempting the foaming Brine. We can ſteep the delicately-flavoured *Chineſe* Leaf, in the Waters of our own Well; or ſpend the Afternoon in our own Parlour, and be regaled with an Infuſion of the finely-ſcented *Arabian* Berry. We can ſeaſon the friendly Bowl with the Juices of the *Orange*, or refreſh our clammy Palate with the Pulp of the *Tamarind*; without feeling that fervent Heat, which imparts ſuch a poignant Reliſh to the former, and give a fever-cooling Virtue to the latter. We can pile upon our Salvers a Pyramid of *Italian* Figs; fill the Interſtices

* Iſai. xxx. 30.

† Called the *Cacoa*, which affords the principal Ingredient of *Chocolate*, and grows on a ſmall Tree in *America*.

terſtices with the Sky-dried Raiſins of *Malaga*; and form a Summit for the inviting Structure, with the *Peſtacia Nut* of *Aleppo*.—By this means, the Eaſtern Spices exhale their Odours on our Tables; and the Weſtern Canes transfuſe their Sweetneſs into our Viands. We clothe our Bodies with the vegetable Fleeces * of the South, and line our Apparel with warm furry Spoils from the North. We can wear the Pearl, poliſhed in the Abyſſes of the *Perſian* Gulf; and walk on the Carpets, manufactured in the Dominions of the *Great Mogul*; yet neither expoſe Ourſelves to the Rage of boiſterous Seas, nor the more dreaded Treachery of barbarous People.—In ſhort; by this grand and beneficial Expedient of Navigation, every Tide wafts into our Ports the Wealth of the remoteſt Climes, and brings the Abundance of the Univerſe, to be unladen on our Quays. *London* becomes a Mart of Nations; and almoſt every private Houſe in the Kingdom, is embelliſhed or accommodated from the four Quarters of the Globe.

Almoſt every private Houſe—Is not this more like rhetorical Flouriſh, than real Truth? Are not all the Advantages I have mentioned, the peculiar Portion of the Rich? Is not the Sea, like high Life and the gay World, ſomewhat *capricious* and *partial*? Beſtowing laviſhly her Favours on the Wealthy, at the ſame Time that She neglects the Needy?—Quite the Reverſe. Like her moſt exalted yet moſt conde-

* *Cotton*, which is a Sort of Wool, encompaſſing the Seed of a Tree.—Its Fruit is of an oval Form, about the Size of a Nut. As it ripens it grows black on the Outſide; and, by the Heat of the Sun, opens in ſeveral Places, diſcovering the Cotton through the Clefts, which is of an admirable Whiteneſs. See CHAMB. *Dict.*

ſcending CREATOR, She is no Reſpector of Perſons. She deals out her Liberalities to All; to the Wealthy, ſuch as are ſuitable to their Circumſtances; to the Indigent, ſuch as are beſt adapted to their Condition. If She ornaments the Abodes of the firſt, She employs the Hands of the laſt; furniſhes *theſe* with gainful Labour, *theſe* with elegant Accommodations. What a Multitude of induſtrious People acquire a Livelihood, by preparing the Commodities intended for Exportation! And what a Multitude of dextrous Artificers maintain their Families, by manufacturing the Materials imported from abroad!

It is reckoned a valuable Species of Beneficence, to provide proper Work for the Poor. This withdraws them from any Temptations, and preſerves them from much Wickedneſs. It hinders them from being a Burden to themſelves, and a Nuiſance to the Public. They might otherwiſe be *idle*, and as Vermine on the Body politic: or even *mutinous*, and as Vipers in the Bowels of the Nation. Whereas, by exerting themſelves in a due Subordination, and with becoming Diligence, they are the very Sinews of the Community; or like the grand Wheel in the Machine of State, whoſe inceſſant Activity diſtributes Plenty, and pours innumerable Conveniencies through the whole.—What a *Maſter* then, or rather what a *Miſtreſs*, is the Sea! How extenſive her Correſpondence, and how large her Demand for Workmen! Into what Branch of Trade does ſhe not enter? What kind of ingenious Science, or uſeful Toil, does ſhe not befriend? How many Millions of honeſt, but needy Perſons are engaged in her Service? And how amply are they repaid for their Pains!

Pains! *They that go down to the Sea in Ships, and occupy their Buſineſs in great Waters, theſe Men ſee the Works of* LORD, *and his Wonders in the Deep.* They alſo that dwell among their own People, and abide in the Villages, even they enjoy the Bounty, and ſhare the Advantages of the Ocean. *They ſuck of the Abundance of the Seas, and of Treaſures hid in the Sand* *. For, though it is falſe Philoſophy, to ſuppoſe the Waters *themſelves* ſtrained through ſubterranean Paſſages, into the inland Countries; yet it is an undeniable Truth, that their beneficial *Effects* are transfuſed into every Town, every Hamlet, and every Cottage.

Surely, the Inhabitants of our Iſle, have Reaſon to turn the Prediction of *Moſes*, concerning the Tribe of *Joſeph*, into a devout and grateful Acknowledgment.—*Bleſſed of the* LORD *is* † *our Land. Bleſſed with the precious Things of Heaven, with the Dew, and with the Deep that coucheth beneath. With the precious Things brought forth by the Sun, and with the precious Things thruſt forth by the Moon. With the chief Things of the antient Mountains, and with the precious Things of the everlaſting Hills: and with the precious Things of the Earth, and the Fulneſs thereof* ‡.

—May

* Deut. xxxiii. 19.

† *Is*, (ſo I would tranſlate the Original) not *be*; in the *predictive*, not precatory Form. This implies a Fulneſs of Faith, and diſtinguiſhes Prophecy from Prayer; beſt ſuits the extraordinary Illumination of *Moſes*; and does moſt Honour to the omniſcient SPIRIT.

‡ *Deut.* xxxiii, 13, 14, 15, 16. Here ſeems to be an exact Summary, and a poetical Deſcription of the Riches of Nature.—*The precious Things of Heaven*; or *Rain*, which deſcends from the upper; and *Dew*, which is formed in the lower Regions of the Firmament—*The*

—May we also enjoy *the Good-will of H I M, who dwelt in the Bush**; and the Grace of H I M, who hung on the Tree! May the *eternal GOD be our Refuge; and underneath* both Us and our Interests, may *his everlasting Arms* be spread!—Happy then wilt Thou be, thrice happy, O *England!* Thy temporal Advantages, and thy spiritual Privileges considered, it may truly be said, *Who*, or what Nation, *is like unto Thee?*

This for my Country. Now let me wish for myself:

GOD of all Worlds! Source and Supreme of Things!
From whom all Life, from whom Duration springs!

Intense

Deep that coucheth beneath; Seas, Rivers, Fountains, Wells, which lie in the Bosom of the Soil; and are Sources of Fertility and Plenty.—*The precious Things brought forth by the Sun*, must certainly denote the Herbs, Plants, Trees, and all Manner of *Vegetables*, with their respective Fruits.—*The precious Things thrust forth by the Moon*, may probably refer to the *mineral* Kingdoms; in the Formation of which, that Ruler of the Night may have a considerable Influence. The Moon is confessedly the Parent of Tides; and may put in Motion those bituminous and saline Fluids, which, circulating through the Pores of the Earth, and fixing in Beds of homogeneous Matter, are supposed to commence Minerals.—As our sacred Philosopher has already specified the vegetable Tribes, and (if I mistake not) the Beds of Fossils, *the principal Things of the Mountains and Hills*, should signify the Sheep, Goats, and other valuable Animals, which feed upon those vast Declivities. Then, *the precious Things of the Earth*, may express those Herds of larger Cattle, which have their Pasturage in the Plains, Valleys, and lower Grounds. A Sense, which recommends itself from this Consideration, That the Wealth of the Antients consisted chiefly in Cattle.—*The Fulness thereof*, may be a Kind of Recapitulation: a comprehensive Term, including the whole Produce of the terraqueous Globe; the *magnificent Liberality of* JEHOVAH to his People.

* Deut. xxxiii. 16.

Intenſe O! let me for thy Glory burn,
Nor fruitleſs view my Days and Months return.
Give me with Wonder at thy Works to glow,
To graſp thy Viſion, and thy Truths to know:
O'er Time's tempeſtuous Sea to reach thy Shore,
To ſing thy Praiſe, and all thy Grace adore,
When Seas ſhall roll, and Time ſhall be no more.

You ſee, *Aſpaſio*, I have been ſtudying the Volume of Nature; endeavouring to read ſome of its capital Characters, and learn ſome of its inſtructive Leſſons. The Sea has been the Page. But how *ſuperficial* is my Peruſal, and how *ſcanty* my Knowledge. Little, very little have I beheld or conceived, relating to thoſe Works of Wonder, which the vaſt unfathomable Deep contains *—the Plants it produces, and the Creatures it nouriſhes —its ſtupendous Rocks, riſing to the Skies; and its inacceſſible Caverns, ſinking to the Center—the Beds of Pearl, which are its native Growth; and the Loads of Gold, which it has gained by Shipwreck; and thoſe Heaps of Shells, which pave the Floor of the watery Realms.—*So* ſuperficial are my Views of *CHRIST*; *ſo* ſcanty is my Acquaintance with the Goſpel.

* Should the Reader deſire to ſee this Subject, more largely opened, and more fully improved, I would refer Him to *Contemplations on the Ocean*, lately publiſhed by my ingenious and pious Friend Mr. PEARSALL. In which, a refined Fancy, and a delicate Philoſophy, compoſe a Chaplet for evangelical Divinity. Uniting ſome of their beautiful and fragrant Flowers, to adorn the Goſpel of GOD our SAVIOUR—to quicken and refreſh the Spirits of his People—to invite and win the Hearts of the Diſobedient.

You, I presume, are sitting at the Feet of that Sublime TEACHER; and attending to the Dictates of *HIS* Mouth, in *whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge* *. Let me promise myself a Communication of *your* Thoughts, as I have freely transmitted a Specimen of *mine*. And I will make no Scruple to acknowledge the Superiority of the Exchange; that I receive

Χρυσεα χαλχειων, εκαλομβοι' ανεαβοιων.

Or, as the eloquent *Isaiah* speaks; *For Brass you will bring Gold, and for Iron you will bring Silver* †: rendering me, by this Intercourse, your more *obliged*, though it is scarce possible for me to be, more than I already am,

Your affectionate

THERON.

P. S. Monsieur *Paschal*, who was remarkably fond of *Brevity*, makes an odd Excuse for transgressing, on a particular Occasion, his favourite Rule. He intreats his Friend to pardon the unusual Length of his Epistle, by assuring Him, *That he had not Time to make it shorter.*— I cannot, it must be confessed, adopt this Philosopher's Apology. For, I have purposely lengthened my Letter, with a View of setting, in this *one* Circumstance, a Pattern for my *Aspasio*.

* Col. ii. 3. † Isai. lx. 17.

LET-

LETTER X.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

I Thank you for your *Letter*, becauſe it entertains and improves me. I thank you for your *Poſtſcript*, becauſe it is my Encouragement and my Apology.—I am ſet down to write, with a copious Stock of Materials. It will be far more difficult to contract, than to enlarge. I muſt therefore acknowledge myſelf obliged to your Candour, for aſſigning me the *eaſieſt* Taſk.—That Prolixity, which, in others, might be ungenteel and faulty; is, in me, an Act of Complaiſance, and an Inſtance of Duty.

Though abſent from You, I went with You in your late Ramble. Your deſcriptive Pen has made me Partaker of the *ideal Delight:* may Divine Grace enable me to ſhare in the *ſpiritual Improvement!*—For indeed the Fields of Nature, and the Scenes of Creation; the wiſe Contrivance, and beneficial Order of the Univerſe; yield ample Matter for religious Improvement. They tell Us a thouſand and a thouſand animated, affecting, noble Things, concerning the bleſſed GOD, and his glorious Perfections. Yet they cannot tell Us the *nobleſt* Things. They cannot give Us the grandeſt View of the divine MAJESTY, nor preſent Us with the brighteſt Diſplay of his Excellencies. Here the whole

Creation faulters, or rather confeſſes its Impotency. *The Depth ſaith, It is not in me; and the Sea ſaith, It is not with me.* It is not to be found on the Globe of the Earth, nor to be traced in the Circuit of the Skies. When you diſplayed the Beauties of the Morn, breaking forth from the Obſcurity of Night; when you adopted that fine ſpirited Aſpiration from our philoſophic Poet; I could not forbear adding—"Thus may the gracious GOD, who "commandeth the Light to ſhine out of the Mid-"night Darkneſs, ſhine into our Hearts; and give "that *incomparably glorious* Knowledge, the Know-"ledge of his bleſſed SELF! Which, though diſ-"cernable through all the Tracts of Creation, and "derivable from every Work of his Almighty Hand; "yet no where beams forth with ſuch *complete* and "ſuch *amiable* Luſtre, as in the Perſon of *JESUS "CHRIST**."—Here we behold all the ſublime Perfections of the DEITY, not only manifeſted with inimitable Splendour, but operating for our own Advantage. We behold them, as *Job* ſpeaks, *for ourſelves* †; and cannot but receive inexpreſſible Refreſhment and Joy from the View.

When You walked beneath the Shade of thoſe huge, horrid, and enormous Cliffs; both amuſed and alarmed, at their ſtupendous Magnitude, and frightful Irregularity.—When You caſt your Eye upon the ſmooth floating Expanſe, which ſpread itſelf with boundleſs and amazing Magnitude below—When You ſurveyed the unmeaſurable Arches of the Sky, bending to their mighty Baſe all around, and raiſed to inconceivable Heights above—When You meditated, in that awful Solitude, on the wild-

eſt

* 2 Cor. iv. 6. † Job xix. 27.

eſt and moſt magnificent Appearances of Nature—I felt the ſame Kind of devout Aſtoniſhment with yourſelf. While the Soul was wrapt in *penſive Stilneſs*, and *pleaſing Dread* *, methought, I heard a Voice, or ſomething like a Voice, from the ſilent Spheres, as well as from the ſounding Seas. It ſeemed to echo back, what the Angel, whom *John* ſaw flying in the midſt of Heaven, once proclaimed; "*Worſhip HIM, who made Heaven and Earth,* "*and the Sea, and the Fountains of Water* †. Wor-"ſhip Him, who ſtretched out that azure Pavilion "with ſuch ſurpaſſing Grandeur: who meaſured "yonder World of Waters, in the Hollow of his "Hand: and before whom, this immenſe Range of "mountainous Cliffs, is but as Duſt upon his "Scale."

When you deſcribed the *diſmal Situation* of a Wretch, expoſed on the Edges of the tremendous Precipice; hanging over the ragged Rocks, and the unfathomable Gulf; and cleaving only to a ſlender, treacherous, breaking Bough: how heartily did I join in your adoring Acknowledgments to that kind, interpoſing, bleſſed Hand, which reſcued us from an infinitely more threatening and dreadful Danger! Reſcued us, as *Slaves*, from the Dominion of the Devil: ſnatched us, as *Brands*, from the inextinguiſhable Burnings. And bid Us (O marvelous, ſuperabundant

* It ſeems to have been ſuch a Kind, not of *anxious* but of *pleaſing* Dread, which ſeized the Diſciples on the Mount of Transfiguration; καὶ ἔφοβοι, for they were ſtruck with a profound, but delightful Awe. *Delightful*, otherwiſe it is not eaſy to conceive, why *Peter* ſhould propoſe to *build Tabernacles* there, or how He could wiſh to continue in thoſe Circumſtances, *Mark* ix. 6.

† Rev. xiv. 7.

ſuperabundant Goodneſs!) bid Us poſſeſs the *Liberty* of Righteouſneſs; bid Us inherit the *Kingdom* of Heaven.

When You mention the paſt Indolence, and the preſent Fervour of your Prayers, I could not forbear reiterating my Praiſes to GOD on your Behalf. This is a Proof, my dear *Theron*, that your Feet are in the Way everlaſting. For it is written, *They ſhall come with Weeping, and with Supplications will I lead them**. This is the Work of the HOLY GHOST, moving and influencing your Heart. For what ſaith the Scripture? *I will pour upon them the Spirit of Grace and of Supplication* †. And our LORD Himſelf mentions this, as the Indication of a hopeful Condition; *Behold! he prayeth* ‡.—Had not *Saul* prayed before? Yes; and made long Prayers too. But he never, till that Inſtant, was ſenſible of his undone and damnable Condition. Never cried to GOD from the Depths of his Diſtreſs, or from the Depths of his Heart. Nor ever ſolicited the Throne of Grace, in the all-prevailing Name of *JESUS CHRIST*.—His Prayers, till then, were ſomewhat like *Motes*, which fluctuate in the Air, without any vigorous Impulſe, or any certain Aim. But, in that Hour, they were like the *Arrow*, which ſprings from the ſtrained Bow; and, quick as Lightning, flies to the Mark.

I was pleaſed to find You, in the Proceſs of your Letter, inſenſibly forgetting the Narrative; and ſo engaged by the Subject, that you ſpoke not as the *Relater*, but as the *Beholder*.—Thus may We always be affected, when We ſtudy the Oracles of Truth. Study them, not as cold unconcerned Critics, who

are

* Jer. xxxi. 9. † Zech. xii. 10. ‡ Acts ix. 11.

are only to judge of their Meaning; but as Perſons *deeply intereſted* in all they contain. Who are particularly addreſſed in every Exhortation, and directed by every Precept. Whoſe are the Promiſes, and to whom belong the precious Privileges.—When We are enabled thus to *receive* and *appropriate* the Contents of that invaluable Book; then we ſhall taſte the Sweetneſs, and feel the Power of the Scriptures. Then We ſhall know, by happy Experience, that our Divine MASTER's Words, are not barely Sounds and Syllables, but *they are Spirit, and they are Life* *.

I was ſtill more agreeably entertained, with your Picture of *Commerce*; and your Diſplay of the Advantages, which We receive from *Navigation*. One Advantage, however, I can ſpecify, which is greater than any, greater than all, You have celebrated. An Advantage, which will endear and ennoble Navigation, ſo long as the Sun and Moon endure. The Goſpel, my Friend, the *Goſpel* of our Salvation, was conveyed through this Channel. Without ſuch a Vehicle, how could that ineſtimable Commodity have reached our Iſland? The Volume that comprizes it, and the Preacher that publiſhed it, both were imported, both brought to Us by Shipping. And may We not ſay, with the inraptured *Iſaiah? How beautiful are the Feet of them, that bring good Tidings; that publiſh Peace; that bring good Tidings of Good; that publiſh Salvation; that ſay unto Zion, Thy GOD reigneth* †. It is pleaſant to hear

* John vi. 63.

† *Iſai.* lii. 7. Never did Language beſpeak an *inraptured* Soul, more ſignificantly than this ſacred Exclamation. The Prophet is all Wonder and all Joy. He is

hear their Voice; pleaſant to contemplate their Meſſage; and pleaſant even to behold, the Ground on which they trod, or the very Waves over which they ſailed.—This made the holy Prophet rejoice in Spirit, when he foreſaw the extenſive Spread of his MASTER's Glory, and the certain Commencement of *our* Happineſs. This put into his Mouth that affectionate and congratulatory Addreſs; which, in a very particular Manner, is directed to Us and our Countrymen: *Sing unto the LORD a new Song, and his Praiſe from the Ends of the Earth: ye that go down to the Sea, and all that is therein; ye Iſles, and the Inhabitants thereof. Let the Wilderneſs and the Cities thereof lift up their Voice; let the Inhabitants of the Rock ſing, let them ſhout from the Top of the Mountains. Let them give Glory unto the LORD; and declare his Praiſe in the Iſlands* *.

We

is ſo enamoured with his Subject, and ſo captivated with the Glory of the *Goſpel*, that He can never ſay enough of its Excellencies.—*Good Tidings*; the very beſt, that Earth could receive, or Heaven proclaim. *Good Tidings of Good*; a moſt comprehenſive Good; a Collection of every Bleſſing; or all good Things in one. *Publiſh Peace*; Peace with GOD, the everlaſting King; and that ſweet Peace of Conſcience, which the whole World cannot give. *Publiſh Salvation*; or that Gift of Righteouſneſs which is the meritorious Cauſe, together with that Spirit of Liberty and Spirit of Adoption, which are the rich and grand Conſtituents of Salvation. *That ſay unto Zion, Thy GOD reigneth*; not Sin and Satan, not Luſt and Appetite, oppreſſive Tyrants and worſe than *Egyptian* Taſk-Maſters; but the All-wiſe and infinitely Gracious JEHOVAH. He, even He ſetteth up his pure, his peaceful, his ſpiritual Kingdom, in the Believer's Heart, in the *Gentile* Nations, and in all Lands.

* Iſai. xlii. 10, 11, 12.

We read, in *Ezekiel*, of the *moſt magnificent* Fleet, that ever ploughed the Seas. The Ship-Boards were of the Fir-Trees of *Senir*, and the Maſts of the Cedars * of *Lebanon*. Oars were hewed from the Oaks of *Baſhan*, and Benches of Ivory were brought from the Iſles of *Chittim*. The fine Linen and broidered Work of *Egypt*, floated to the Wind, and formed the Sails. While Blue and Purple from the Iſles of *Eliſhah*, compoſed the Rigging, and cloathed the Mariners.—Let Us ſuppoſe, that the Freight of this ſplendid Navy, was proportioned, in Dignity and Value, to its ſumptuous Tackling. Yet how poor, how deſpicable were either, were both, if eſtimated with the Treaſures of the Goſpel: thoſe *divine Treaſures*, which ſpring from the Imputation of our REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs! And which have much the ſame kindly Influence on *religious Practice*, as Navigation, with all her Improvements, has upon Traffic.—Give me leave to confirm this Aſſertion, by ſelecting a few Inſtances, and applying them in a few Interrogatories.

One of the Benefits, proceeding from the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs, is *Pardon*. Pardon, not partial, but complete. A Pardon of each Sin, be it ever ſo *heinous*; a Pardon of all Sins, be they ever ſo *numerous*. For thus ſaith GOD the LORD, who ſent both his Prophets and Apoſtles, preaching Peace by *JESUS CHRIST*. *I will pardon* ALL *their Iniquities, whereby they have ſinned, and whereby they have tranſgreſſed againſt me* †.—To learn the deſirable Nature of this Bleſſing, let Us ſtep

* Ezek. xxvii. 5, &c. † Jer. xxxiii. 8.

ſtep back into the Annals of Hiſtory, and attend a traitorous unhappy Nobleman to his *vindictive* Exit. His Body is demanded by the Miniſters of Juſtice. Reluctant and trembling, He is conducted to the Scaffold. There, the alarmed Criminal ſees the mourning Block. Sees the glittering Ax. Sees the Coffin prepared for his Corps. Sees thouſands of anxious Spectators; waiting, with eager Looks and throbbing Hearts, the fearful Cataſtrophe. In a Word; he ſees Death advancing, with all the Solemnities of *Horror* and *Woe*.—Time elapſes. The preparatory Ceremonies are diſpatched. The fatal Period is arrived. No longer Reſpite can be allowed. He muſt ſubmit to immediate Execution. He proſtrates himſelf to receive the Stroke. But—ſeized with new Terrors, at the poiſed Ax, and approaching Blow, He ſtarts from the dangerous Poſture.—Again he bends, and again ſnatches his Neck from the impending Edge.—A third Time, He lifts his pale Countenance, to the pitying Crowds, and departing Light.—Once more He bows to the Block, and once more raiſes his Head, in *wiſhful Expectation* of the Royal Clemency.—At this critical Inſtant; at this Moment of awful Suſpence; had a Meſſenger appeared, with a Shout of Joy upon his Tongue, and a ſealed Pardon in his Hand; O! how tranſporting the News! welcome, *inexpreſſibly welcome* the Favour!—What was denied to his paſſionate Deſires; denied to the importunate Solicitations of his Friends; is freely offered to Us in the Goſpel of *CHRIST*: a Pardon of infinitely higher Conſequence; which obliterates Millions and Millions of rebellious Acts: which extends its bleſſed Effects, not merely through the

little

little Span of Life, but beyond the Gates of the Grave—beyond the Boundaries of Time—through all the Ages of Eternity.

How unfathomable is that immenſe Flood, on which my *Theron* lately exerciſed his Contemplation! The toiling Plummets, with all their Length of Cordage, are unable to find a Bottom. Were the hugeſt Millſtones, or the higheſt Towers, or the moſt ſpacious Cities, caſt into that prodigious Gulf, they would be totally overwhelmed, and irrecoverably loſt. Therefore the inſpired Prophet, to ſhew the *boundleſs* Extent of the divine Mercies in *JESUS CHRIST*, and to denote the *Fulneſs* of their Pardon who are cleanſed in the REDEEMER's Blood, hath illuſtrated both by this grand Similitude. *Thou wilt caſt all their Sins into the Depths of the Sea* * —not one, or a few, but *all* their Sins—not barely behind thy Back, but into the *Sea*—and not into the ſhallow Parts, but into the very *Depths* of the Ocean—ſo that they ſhall never riſe up in Judgment; never be taken notice of; no, nor ever be remembered any more.

With an Act of total Indemnity, let Us join a thorough *Reſtoration* to *Favour*.—If the Wrath of an earthly King be as *the Roaring of a Lion* †; how much more tremendous is *His* Indignation, who is able to caſt both Body and Soul into Hell! If the Favour of an earthly Sovereign be *as Dew upon the Graſs*; how much more deſirable and delightful HIS Loving-kindneſs, whom all Things in Heaven and Earth obey!—By the Righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*, we are freed from all foreboding Apprehenſions of the former, and eſtabliſhed in the comfortable Poſ-

ſeſſion

* Mic. vii. 19. † Prov. xix. 12.

ſeſſion of the latter. The Goſpel renews and ratifies that joyful Proclamation of the angelic Hoſt, *Peace on Earth, and Good-will to Men* *. GOD is not only pacified towards Believers, but well pleaſed with them in his dear SON. *Well pleaſed*, ſays the Prophet, *for his Righteouſneſs ſake*. Beheld in this ſpotleſs Robe, they are the Objects of his complacential Delight, and He rejoices over them to do them Good.

Nay, they are made Children; *Sons and Daughters, of the LORD Almighty* †. And if Sons, then Heirs; Heirs of GOD, and joint Heirs with *CHRIST* ‡. —*As many as received Him*, to juſtify them by his precious Blood and imputed Righteouſneſs; *to them gave He Power*, the Prerogative or Privilege, *to become the Sons of GOD* ‖. As verily and truly the Sons of GOD, as ever they were the Children of their natural Parents.—The chief Captain mentioned in the *Acts*, purchaſed his Freedom of the Imperial City *Rome*, with a great Sum of Money §. If ſuch a little tranſient Immunity, was ſo valuable in his Eſteem; who can expreſs the Worth, who can conceive the Dignity, of this divine Adoption? Yet it belongs to Thoſe, who receive the Goſpel, and are intereſted in *CHRIST*.—They have Acceſs to the Omnipotent BEING; ſuch free and welcome Acceſs, as a beloved Child to an indulgent Father. To Him they may fly for Aid, in every Difficulty; and from Him obtain a Supply, in all their Wants.

GOD, as the ſacred Charter runs, IS THEIR GOD. All his lovely, all his adorable Perfections,

* Luke ii. 14. † 2 Cor. vi. 18. ‡ Rom. viii. 17.
‖ John i. 12. § Acts xxii. 28.

tions, are their glorious Inheritance, and their exceeding great Reward. That eternal Power, to which nothing is impoſſible, exerts itſelf as their *Guard*; and that unerring Wiſdom, from which nothing is concealed, acts as their *Guide*. His very Juſtice is no longer an incenſed Adverſary, demanding Vengeance, or meditating Deſtruction; but a faithful *Guarantee*, to provide for the punctual Execution of the REDEEMER's Treaty, and for their complete Enjoyment of its various Bleſſings. —What a Privilege is this! Rather what a *Cluſter* of Privileges is Here! Weigh the Kingdoms of the World; caſt all the Glories of them into the Scale; and they will be found, when compared with theſe divine Prerogatives, *emptier* than the Bubble that burſts, *lighter* than the Spark that expires.

In the Goſpel, which is the Miniſtration of Righteouſneſs, are given exceeding great and precious Promiſes. Of ſuch *Value*, that they were procured by the Blood of *CHRIST*; of ſuch *Certainty*, that they are ratified by the Oath * of JEHOVAH. So *durable*, that, though all Fleſh is Graſs, and all the Goodlineſs thereof as the Flower of the Graſs, this Word of our GOD abideth for ever †; ſo *efficacious*, that there are no ſuch Cordials to revive our fainting, and no ſuch Bulwarks to ſecure our indangered Souls. With theſe the Bible is as richly repleniſhed, as the clear midnight Sky is beſpangled with Stars. They *are all Yea and Amen*, conſigned over as a ſure unalienable Portion, *to them that are in JESUS CHRIST* ‡.

Another Benefit, given in conſequence of the REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs, is the *ſanctifying*

* Heb. vi. 17. † 1 Pet. i. 23. ‡ 2 Cor. i. 20.

SPIRIT. A moſt comprehenſive Bleſſing this! Our SAVIOUR intimates, that it includes every heavenly Gift, is an Aſſemblage of all good Things *. —It muſt, doubtleſs, be a ſingular Comfort to blind *Bartimeus*, when his Eyes were opened, and He beheld the all-chearing Light of the Sun †! So, and far more comfortable, are the *inlightening* Influences of the SPIRIT; when they ſhine upon Us wretched Creatures, who ſit in Darkneſs and the Shadow of Death. When they reveal an all-ſufficient SAVIOUR, dying for *our* Sins, and riſing again for *our* Juſtification.—Who can imagine the Satisfaction and the Tranſport of the *Leper*, when He felt Himſelf healed of his inveterate Diſeaſe? Felt the ſoothing Senſations of Eaſe, where Sores rankled and Pain raged! Inſtead of infeebling Langours and loathſome Deformity, Vigour braces his Limbs, and Comelineſs blooms in his Countenance ‡. Equally benign and equally ſalubrious, is the regenerating Agency of the Divine SPIRIT, on our depraved, polluted, ſenſual Minds.—How ſignal was the Recovery, and how welcome the Change! When that unhappy Creature, ſo wildly agitated by a *miſchievous Dæmon*, was reinſtated in the peaceful Poſſeſſion of Himſelf and his Faculties! When, inſtead of unnaturally cutting his own Fleſh, or committing barbarous Outrages on innocent Travelers, He ſat compoſed and attentive at the Feet of *JESUS* ‖! Receiving heavenly Inſtruction from his Lips, and learning the Meekneſs of Wiſdom from his Example. So ſalutary and beneficial is the *transforming* Power of the HOLY GHOST

* Compare *Matt.* vii. 11. with *Luke* xi. 13. † Mark x. 52. ‡ Matt. viii. 3. ‖ Mark v. 15.

GHOST the Comforter; ſoftening the rugged, ſweetening the moroſe, and calming the paſſionate Temper. — It is undoubtedly the utmoſt Improvement and the higheſt Happineſs of our Nature, to have the Image of the bleſſed GOD reinſtamped on our Hearts. This is an Earneſt, and an Anticipation alſo, of endleſs Felicity. A *Bud* which will open in Heaven, and ſpread into immortal Glory. A *Dawn*, which will ſhine more and more, till the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſes, and brightens it into everlaſting Day. This Bud the ſanctifying SPIRIT ingrafts, this Dawn the Grace of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* diffuſes, in the barren and benighted Soul.

In a Word; receive this Righteouſneſs, and You have a Title to all Bleſſings, whether they be preſent or future, bodily or ſpiritual, temporal or eternal. From the neceſſary Conveniencies of Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on; even to the Crown of Glory, and the Fulneſs of Joy. All are dependent on, all are connected with, our REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs *.—You ſee now, *Theron*, That our Scheme, has no Tendency to impoveriſh your ſpiritual Condition, or diminiſh your true Riches: any more than thoſe Tracts of Water, which ſurround our Iſland, are detrimental to the Wealth of its Inhabitants. Detrimental! No; they are an inexhauſtible Source

* This Righteouſneſs is ſtyled, in the ſacred Language, *Righteouſneſſes*. *Vitringa*, aſſigning the Reaſon of this peculiar Phraſeology, ſays; *Dicitur autem Vati noſtro hæc Juſtitia* צדקות, *terminatione plurali—tum ob Excellentiam ejus—tum ob Amplitudinem, qua omnibus Peccatoribus credentibus ad Salutem ſufficiat—tum ob Effecta, quatenus* complectitur omnia Jura Filiorum DEI. VITRING. *in Jeſai* xlv. 24.

of Treaſure. They convey to our Uſe the choiceſt Accommodations, and the moſt elegant Delights. Such as would in vain be expected, if the whole Ocean was converted into the fineſt Meads, and moſt fertile Paſtures. *So*—but to apply this Compariſon, would foreſtal your principal Queſtion.

" Do not theſe Favours, though unſpeakably " precious in themſelves, tend to the Introduction " or Support of Ungodlineſs?"—Quite the Reverſe. Have We *Redemption* through our *SAVIOUR*'s Blood, even the Forgiveneſs of our Sins? We are redeemed, not that We may ſink in Supineneſs, or launch into Licentiouſneſs, but that We may be a peculiar People, zealous of good Works *.—Are We made the *Children* of GOD? Then let our Light ſo ſhine before Men, that others, ſeeing our good Works, may glorify our FATHER which is in Heaven †. This is the genuine Conſequence of ſuch a Doctrine, and the proper Effect of ſuch a Benefit.—Are We veſted with ſacred *Privileges!* Theſe admoniſh Us, theſe urge Us, and theſe diſpoſe Us, to walk worthy of HIM, who hath called us to his Kingdom and Glory ‡. Shall not the Citizens of Heaven be animated with higher Views, than the Slaves of Appetite, and Drudges of the World?—Are We conſtituted *Heirs* of the *Promiſes?* The Grace which they aſcertain, is intended to make Us Partakers of a Divine Nature ‖; and the Encouragement which they adminiſter, incites Us to cleanſe Ourſelves from all Filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, incites Us to perfect Holineſs in the Fear of GOD §.

—Such

* Tit. ii. 14. † Matt. v. 16. ‡ 1 Theſſ. ii. 12.
‖ 2 Pet. i. 4. § 2 Cor. vii. 1.

—Such high Immunities are a moſt endearing Perſuaſive, not to diſgrace, but magnify, not to provoke, but pleaſe, their unſpeakably beneficent AUTHOR.

I might farther obſerve, that Holineſs is one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed Bleſſings in our Syſtem. Nay, is the very *central* Bleſſing, to which all the others verge; in which they all terminate.—Were We *choſen* from Eternity? It was for this Purpoſe, that We may be holy and unblameable in Love *.—Are We *called* in Time? It is to this Intent, that We may ſhew forth the Praiſes of Him, who hath called Us out of Darkneſs into his marvelous Light †.—Are We *created again in CHRIST JESUS?* It is, to capacitate Us for acceptable Service, and to furniſh Us unto every good Work ‡. *I will put my Spirit within You, ſaith the LORD.* For what End? *That Ye may walk in my Statutes, and keep my Judgments, and do them* ‖. Here comes in my *Theron*'s Favourite, ſincere Obedience. And GOD forbid, that We ſhould hold the Door, or ſhut our Arms, againſt ſo acceptable a Gueſt!—Far, very far from diſcarding ſincere Obedience, We would only introduce it, under its due Character, and in its proper Order. *Under its due Character*; as the Fruit, not the Cauſe, of our Intereſt in *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs. *In its proper Order*; as following, not preceding, the Gift of Juſtification.

Theſe Privileges, my dear Friend, are ſalutary, as the Pool of *Bethesda* §. They are reſtorative, as the Waters of *Siloam* ⸸. Or like that ſacred Stream flowing from the *Sanctuary*; which healed the Ri-

* Eph. i. 4. † 1 Pet. ii. 9. ‡ Eph. ii. 10.
‖ Ezek xxxvi. 27. § John v. 4. ⸸ John ix. 7.

vers, healed the Sea, and made even the Defart flouriſh *.—If Juſtification by the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST* had a Tendency, to ſubvert the Foundation of Holineſs; to confirm the hypocritical Profeſſor, in his Neglect of moral Duties; or diſcourage the ſincere Convert from the Purſuit of real Virtue; it would, doubtleſs, be unworthy of any Acceptation, or rather worthy of univerſal Abhorrence. But I dare appeal, not only to the Nature of the Doctrine, and the Reaſon of Things, but to the Experience of All; yes, of all who *have taſted, that the LORD is gracious* †.—"Speak, "Ye who are enabled to believe, that GOD is "reconciled; has received the all-ſatisfying A-"tonement; and placed his SON's Righteouſ-"neſs to your Account! That He regards You "as his Children, and will receive You to his "Glory!—Have You not, under *ſuch* Convic-"tions, felt your Hearts exulting with conſcious "Joy; and every Power of your Souls ſpringing "forward, to glorify your heavenly FATHER "—glorify Him by every Inſtance of Obedience, "Fidelity, and Zeal?"

Can ſuch invaluable Benefits have a prejudicial Influence on our Practice, if, to the Conſideration of their ſuperlative Worth, We add that *unequaled Price*, by which they were purchaſed?—HE who is high above all Height, humbled Himſelf to be made of a Woman, and born in a Stable; that We might be admitted into the Family of GOD, and exalted to the Manſions of Heaven. And will this great Humiliation, which is the Baſis of our Happineſs, prompt Us to look down with *Contempt*

* Ezek. xlvii. 8, 9. † 1 Pet. ii. 3.

tempt on Others, or entertain *arrogant* Thoughts of Ourſelves?

The ONLY BEGOTTEN and the ſupreme Delight of the FATHER, was numbered with Tranſgreſſors, and ranked with Felons; that We might be joined to the innumerable Company of Angels, and aſſociated with Saints in Glory everlaſting. And will any One make this a Precedent or a Plea, for *walking in the Counſel of the Ungodly; for ſtanding in the Way of Sinners; or ſitting in the Seat of the Scornful* *?

All manner of Evil was ſpoken of the faultleſs *JESUS*; his bleſſed Name was vilified by blaſpheming Tongues, and his unblameable Conduct blackened with the fouleſt Aſperſions; on purpoſe that We may be applauded, when We are judged; and each hear thoſe tranſporting Words, WELL DONE THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT †! Will this embolden Us to *diſhonour* our LORD, and *ſtain* our holy Profeſſion? Shall We from hence be induced to open the Mouths of his Enemies, and furniſh them with Occaſion to ſpeak reproachfully?

HE went, galled with the Laſhes of the Scourge, and penetrated with the pungent Thorns; He went, loaded with the execrable Croſs ‡, and marking the Road with his precious Blood; *thus* the King of

* Pſal. i. 1. † Matt. xxv. 21.

‡ *John* xix. 17. Should it be objected, that they compelled *Simon* the *Cyrenian* to bear his Croſs. I acknowledge it. But this, I apprehend, was not done, till they perceived our LORD ready to faint under the Load. Nor did his cruel Enemies even then diſburden Him, becauſe they pitied, or purpoſed to relieve Him; but only to reſerve Him for greater Ignominy and ſeverer Torment.

Heaven went—to his Throne? No, but to his ignominious and tormenting Exit: that We may enter into the celestial *Sion*, with Songs of Triumph on our Lips, and with everlasting Joy on our Heads. Does this invite Us to go, crowned with Rose-buds, to the House of *Riot*; or go, muffled in Disguise, to the *Midnight-Revel?* Will it not rather incline Us, to sit down at his pierced Feet, and bathe them with our Tears, and take Delight * in mourning for our crucified LORD?

Behold! He hangs on the cursed Tree. There, there He hangs; rent with Wounds, and racked with Pain. He pours his Groans, and spills his Blood. He bows his Head, his patient princely Head, and dies—astonishing, transporting Consideration! He dies for *You!* He dies for *Me!*—And will this harden our Hearts, will this arm our Hands, to crucify Him afresh by any allowed Iniquity? Does not Reason suggest, and Christianity dictate, and all that is ingenuous enforce, the Apostle's Inference? *If One died for All, then they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them* †.

He thought upon Us, long before the Foundations of the World were laid; He remembers Us, now he

* The Sorrow, arising from such tender and grateful Views of the crucified *JESUS*, is that evangelical godly Sorrow, which *worketh Repentance unto Salvation not to be repented of*, 2 Cor. vii. 10. And is there not Reason—when We consider the Pains He felt, the Curse He bore, and the Blood He shed—is there not abundant Reason to say, with *Homer*'s afflicted Hero?

——————————Τέταρπωμεσθα γοοιο.

Iliad. Υ.

† 2 Cor. v. 15, 16.

he is exalted to the Right-hand of the MAJESTY in the Heavens; and will never, never forget Us, through all the Revolutions of Eternity. And is this a Motive to forget his Name; to diſregard his Word; or to imitate the ſhameful Neutrality and Indifference of *Gallio?* Impreſſed with a Senſe of this invariable and everlaſting Kindneſs, ſurely, We ſhall declare Ourſelves, as thoſe Captives in *Babylon*, concerning their dear native City *Jeruſalem: If I forget Thee*, O bleſſed *JESUS*, *let my Right-hand forget her Cunning*; *if I do not remember Thee, let my Tongue cleave to the Roof of my Mouth* *.

——————————Remember Thee!
Ay, my dear LORD, while Memory holds a Seat
In this devoted Breaſt—Remember Thee!
Yes, from the Table of my Memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond Records,
Which Youth and Obſervation copied there,
And thy Remembrance all alone ſhall live
Within the Book and Volume of my Brain †.

Is it poſſible, *Theron*, for the Contemplation of ſuch Goodneſs, to weaken the Motives, or relax the Springs of Obedience? As ſoon may *lenient Balms* kill, and rankeſt Poiſons cure? Is ſuch a Belief calculated to diſcourage Duty, and patronize Licentiouſneſs? Juſt as much, as *vernal Showers* are fitted to cleave the Earth with Chinks, or Summer Suns to glaze the Waters with Ice.—When *Anthony* made an Oration to the Soldiers, on Occaſion of *Cæſar*'s Death; when He ſhewed them their honoured Maſter's Robe, transfixed with ſo many Daggers;

* Pſal. cxxxvii. 5, 6. † SHAKESPEAR.

gers; when He reminded them of the Victories they had won, under their aſſaſſinated Commander; when He farther informed them, that their murdered General had remembered them in his Will—had bequeathed all his fine Gardens, and beautiful Walks, to their Uſe and Delight;—Heavens! How they took Fire! *Revenge* ſparkled in their Eyes: *Revenge* flamed in their Boſoms: *Revenge* was all their Cry. They flew to the Houſes of the Conſpirators; laid them even with the Ground; and had they met with the Owners, would have tore them Limb from Limb.—Some ſuch Reſentment againſt Sin, will a Senſe of our adored REDEEMER's Sufferings excite. Eſpecially, when ſet home by his Bleſſed SPIRIT, and conſidered in Connection with thoſe deteſtable Iniquities, which cauſed them; and with thoſe invaluable Bleſſings, which were procured by them.—Nothing, nothing is ſo effectual, to beget the moſt *irreconcileable Abhorrence* of all Ungodlineſs; to make the Remembrance of it, bitter as Wormwood; the Temptations to it, horrible as Hell.

Let me remind You of an Incident, related by your favourite Hiſtorian *Xenophon*.—*Cyrus* had taken captive the young Prince of *Armenia*, together with his beautiful and blooming Princeſs; whom He had lately married, and of whom He was paſſionately fond. When both were brought to the Tribunal, *Cyrus* aſked the Prince; what He would give, to be reinſtated in his Kingdom?—He anſwered, with an Air of Indifference; "That, as for his Crown, and "*his own* Liberty, He valued them at a very low "Rate. But, if *Cyrus* would reſtore his beloved "Princeſs,

"Princess, to her native Dignity and hereditary Possessions, He should infinitely rejoice; and would "pay (this He uttered with Tenderness and Ardour) "would willingly *pay his Life* for the Purchase."— Could such a Declaration, so highly endearing, alienate the Affections of the Princess, or induce Her to violate her Fidelity? Let her own Conduct answer the Query. When all the Prisoners were dismissed with Freedom, it is impossible to express, how much they were charmed with their royal Benefactor. Some celebrated his martial Accomplishments. Some applauded his social Virtues. All were *prodigal* of their Praises, and *lavish* in grateful Acknowledgments. And You, said the Prince, (addressing himself to his Bride) what think You of *Cyrus*?—I did not observe Him, replied the Princess.—Not observe Him! Upon what then was your Attention fixed?—Upon that *dear* and *generous* Man, who declared, "He would purchase my Li-"berty, at the Expence of his very Life*."— Was her Heart impressed, were all her Thoughts ingrossed by that benevolent *Offer*? And shall ours be less affected with the incomparably more tender and endearing Love of *CHRIST*?—He was not only willing, but *actually* laid down his Life for Us; a Life immensely precious, and of higher Dignity than all Heavens.—He laid down his Life, not for amiable Persons, or worthy Creatures, but for vile Earth, and miserable Sinners.—*Purchasing* thereby for Us and our Children, Privileges of inestimable Worth, and of everlasting Duration.

Will

* Εγω μεν και της ψυχης πριαιμην ωστε μητοτε λατρευσαι ταυτην. XENOPH. *de Cyri Instit.* Lib. III.

Will not such Beneficence, so unmerited, so unequaled, win * the most reluctant, and melt the most obdurate Heart? The Heart, which is not wrought upon by this Miracle of Divine Compassion, must be Steel, must be Adamant; quite impenetrable, and absolutely incorrigible.—" O Thou ever Blessed, thou All-gracious REDEEMER, *thy Love to* " *Us is wonderful*; *passing*, I will not say, *the Love* " *of Women* †, but the Power of Language, and the " Reach of Thought! Who can hold out against " such charming Attractives? Who can resist such " heavenly Goodness?—Only let a *Sense* of thy " Love be always warm, always operative on our " Minds. This shall be instead of a thousand *Ar*-" *guments* to engage, instead of ten thousand *Motives* " to quicken our Obedience."—Other Motives may produce some external Services, or hypocritical Perform-

* *Beneficia*, says one of the Antients, *qui invenit, Compedes invenit*. Which fine Sentiment may almost serve as a Comment, on the beautiful and tender Declaration of GOD by his Prophet *Hosea*; *I drew them* to Obedience *with Cords of a Man, with Bands of Love*. Chap. xi. 4. HE who made, and intimately knows our Frame, knew that these Motives would be most powerful in Operation; most powerful on Creatures, capable of Love, and susceptible of Gratitude. Therefore He calls them, *The Cords of a Man*.—And if a Deliverance from temporal Bondage, if the Settlement of *Israel* in all the Plenty of *Canaan*, constituted so sweet an Incitement to Duty; doubtless, the everlasting Benefits mentioned by *Aspasio*, together with all the endearing Circumstances of their Procurement, must be abundantly more engaging.—May the SPIRIT from on High rend the *Veil* of Ignorance and Insensibility! Let into our Hearts the Knowledge and Faith of these great evangelical Truths! We shall then want no *farther* Demonstration, either of the Propriety of the Remark, or the Efficacy of the Principles.

† 2 Sam. i. 26.

formances. Terrors may extort the Drudgery of the Hand. Bribes may purchaſe the Adulation of the Tongue. But this conciliates the Will; this proſelytes the Affections; this captivates the very Soul; and makes all its Powers *like the Chariots of Amminadib* *, ready, expedite, and active in Duty.

Hear the holy Apoſtle, giving an Account of Himſelf and his ſpiritual State. He ſpeaks in Language ſomewhat ſimilar, though greatly ſuperior, to the Profeſſion of the *Armenian* Princeſs.—"So great is "the Glory, ſo rich is the Grace, ſo ſuperabundant "are the Merits of my REDEEMER, *that I am* "*determined to know nothing but CHRIST JESUS* "*and Him crucified* †.—Aſk the ſame zealous Apoſtle; *What* prompted Him to ſuch indefatigable Diligence, and animated him with ſuch invincible Fortitude? *Why* did He decline no Toil, and dread no Danger; rejoice in Tribulation, and glory in Reproach ‡; welcome Perſecution, and defy Death? This

* Cant. vi. 12. † 1 Cor. ii. 2.

‡ That ſupreme Affection to the bleſſed *JESUS*, which reigned in the Hearts of his primitive Diſciples, could never have been ſo emphatically diſplayed by any Strokes of Eloquence, as by their own chearful and heroic Manner of expreſſing themſelves, relation to their Sufferings.—Far from regretting, *I take pleaſure* (ſays the Apoſtle) *in Afflictions*; and embrace them, when occurring in my Divine MASTER's Service, with a real Complacency, εὐδοκω. 2 Cor. xii. 10.—*To you*, adds the ſame Apoſtle, and ſpeaks in a congratulatory Strain, *it is given* (ἐχαρισθη) as a deſirable and diſtinguiſhed Privilege, *to ſuffer in behalf of CHRIST*. Philip. i. 29.—St. *Luke*, recording the abuſive and cruel Outrages, committed on two Diſciples, for preaching boldly in the Name of *JESUS*, uſes a Phraſe remarkably gallant and ſpirited; *They departed from the Council rejoicing, ὅτι καθηξιώθησαν ἀτιμασθηναι, that they were counted worthy to ſuffer*

This is his Reply; "*The Love of CHRIST con-*
"*ſtraineth* * *me*; beareth me on, with much the
"ſame ſtrong, ſteady, prevailing Influence, which
"Winds and Tide exert, when they waft the Veſ-
"ſel, to its deſtined Harbour."

Shall we hear what another Diſciple, one of the moſt advanced Proficients in Divine Love, ſays upon the Subject? One who learned his Knowledge, not in the School of Philoſophy, but on his SAVIOUR's Boſom. *This is the Love of GOD, that we walk after his Commandments* †. This is the natural Fruit, this the certain Evidence, of Love to that glorious, tranſcendent, and adorably merciful BEING. What? Not that We ſupinely neglect, much leſs that We profanely violate, his ſacred Precepts; but that with Aſſiduity and Delight, We make them the Rule of our Conduct.—*Charity edifieth* ‡: this Divine Love, far from razing the Foundations, far from demoliſhing the Structure, *buildeth up* ‖ the fair Fabric of univerſal Godlineſs.

Let me borrow an Illuſtration from your own Letter. When a Pebble is caſt into the ſmooth Canal, it moves the Center, and forms a Circle. The firſt creates a ſecond: the ſecond breaks into a third: they

ſuffer Shame; had the *Honour* of being *vilified* and *reproached*, in a Cauſe ſo highly venerable.—This Paſſage is a fine Exemplification of the Figure, which Rhetoricians ſtyle *Oxymorum*. *Horace's*—*Dulce Periculum*—*Splendidè mendax*—*Quo beatus Vulnere*—read flat, and look dim, upon the Compariſon. *Acts* v. 41.

* Could You ſtation a Coward, in the Midſt of a numerous *Army* advancing to the Battle; or rather, could you place a Boat on the impetuous Cataracts of the *Nile*; You would *ſee* what is meant by the ſignificant Word, συνεχει. 2 Cor. v. 14.

† 2 John *ver.* 6. ‡ 1 Cor. viii. 1. ‖ Οικοδομει

they continue to multiply and expand themſelves, till the whole Surface is covered with circular Undulations. Thus, the Love of an All-gracious REDEEMER *, when *ſhed abroad in the Soul by the HOLY GHOST* †, will diffuſe itſelf through every intellectual Faculty, and extend to every Species of Duty. Till the whole Heart is filled with the Image, and

* I cannot but think, the Reaſoning is much more juſt, and the Principle much more efficacious, in *Aſpaſio*'s Manner of ſtating the Affair, than in the following famous Lines:

Self-love but ſerves the virtuous Mind to wake,
As the ſmall Pebble ſtirs the peaceful Lake:
The Center mov'd, a Circle ſtrait ſucceeds,
Another ſtill, and ſtill another ſpreads.
Friend, Parent, Neighbour, firſt it will embrace,
His Country next, and next all human Race:
Wide and more wide th' O'erflowings of the Mind
Take every Creature in of every Kind.

Self-love too often acts on the Affections, as a Blaſt on the Leaves, *ſhrivels* and *contracts* them. But the Love of *CHRIST*, like a vernal Sun on the tender Buds, *opens*, and *expands* them; till they become wide, as the Extent of his gracious Redemption; wide as the Compaſs of his rational Creation.—By Self-love I am almoſt neceſſarily determined to *malign* the Perſons, who croſs my Inclinations, and obſtruct my Intereſts. From the Love of *CHRIST*, I have a cogent Reaſon, and a moſt prevailing Inducement to love my very *Enemies*.—How does St. *Peter* analize this Subject? Not in Mr. *Pope*'s, not in Lord *Bolingbroke*'s Method *Godlineſs*, or a ſupreme Love to GOD reconciled in CHRIST, He repreſents as the Root or *Trunk*: then *brotherly Kindneſs*, or an affectionate Regard to Relations, Friends, Fellow-Chriſtians, as ſome of the grand and maſter *Branches*: after this *Charity*, or a diffuſive Good-will to all Mankind, as the Spread of *Boughs*, which complete and adorn the Tree. 2 *Pet.* i. 7.

† Rom. v. 5.

and the whole Behaviour regulated by the Law of the Bleſſed GOD.—So that I am perſuaded, there is a great deal of Truth and Solidity, as every One muſt acknowledge, there is a peculiar Spirit and Beauty, in the Apoſtrophe of our Poet;

Talk they of Morals? O thou bleeding Love!
Thou Maker of new Morals to Mankind,
*The grand Morality is Love of THEE**.

You mentioned the *Loadſtone*, as moſt ſignally and moſt extenſively ſerviceable in the ſea-faring Buſineſs. Such is *Faith*, ſo efficacious, in practical *Chriſtianity*.—This, perhaps, you think a ſcanty and defective Principle. The Property of turning to the polar Star, and pointing out the northern Part of the World, may ſeem equally mean and inconſiderable. But as the one is the very Soul of Navigation, the other is the very Life of Holineſs. —It is ſomewhat like the Stone, which the *Babylonian* Monarch ſaw in his Dream, *cut from the Rock without Hands* †. Which, though deſpicable to human Appearance, was mighty in Operation; deſtroyed the ſuperb Statue; became a great Mountain, and filled the whole Earth. Thus will Faith exert its kindly, yet triumphant Energy; to every Corruption, that it may be ſubdued; to every Virtue, that it may be cheriſhed.

Faith is a real Perſuaſion, founded on GOD's Word, and wrought by his SPIRIT, that the Bleſſed *JESUS* has ſhed his Blood for *my Sins*; has fulfilled all Righteouſneſs *in my Stead*; and obtained eternal Redemption *for me* ‡.

When

* Night-Thoughts, N° IV. † Dan. ii. 34.

‡ This Definition of *Faith* may poſſibly, at the firſt View, diſſatisfy and alarm even ſome pious People; implying,

When the ALMIGHTY ſunk the Cavities of the Ocean, and repleniſhed them with the liquid Element, He provided an inexhauſtible Source of Moiſture, for the Refreſhment of every Animal, and the Nutriment of every Vegetable. In like manner, where-ever He works this true Faith, He plants the Seed of *univerſal* Holineſs, and provides for the Propagation of *every* Virtue. This Perſuaſion of the Divine Good-will, pacifies Conſcience, and fills the Soul with Admiration, Gratitude, and Joy. This Diſcovery of our Pardon and perfect Reconciliation in the Bleſſed JESUS, overcomes our natural Enmity, and excites a fervent Deſire to pleaſe our moſt merciful FATHER. In ſhort; this Experience, and theſe Views, of the abundant Grace of GOD in CHRIST, attract and aſſimilate the Soul; turning it into his amiable Likeneſs *, "as the Wax is turned to the imprinted "Seal."—What will be the Language of ſuch a Perſon?

"Did my exalted MASTER empty Himſelf "and become poor, that his moſt unworthy Ser- "vant might be *filled with all the Fulneſs of GOD* †? "And ſhall not I chearfully deny myſelf the expen- "ſive Pleaſures of the World, that I may have

plying, as they apprehend, too great a Degree of *Aſſurance*. But if they pleaſe to take it in *Connection*, with the Explanation and Adjuſtment, delivered in the *Sixteenth Dialogue*, I hope, all Cauſe of Diſapprobation or Surpriſe will vaniſh. I flatter myſelf, that the Sentiment will be found, not only comfortable for the Sinner, but agreeable to Scripture; and truly *unexceptionable*, as well as highly *deſirable*.

* 2 Cor. iii. 18. † Eph. iii. 19.

" ſomewhat to beſtow on his needy Children ?—
" Has the Death of *CHRIST*, as a Puniſhment,
" ſatisfied the moſt rigorous Juſtice for my Sins ?
" As a Price, has it ranſomed me from the dreadful
" Damnation of Hell ? As a Sacrifice, has it made
" my Peace with GOD Moſt High? Shall I not
" then, by theſe *Mercies* of my dying LORD, ſhall
" I not be induced to preſent all the Members of
" my Body, and all the Faculties of my Soul, as a
" *living Sacrifice* * to his Honour ?—Do I believe,
" that my SAVIOUR has not only redeemed me
" from the Curſe, but eſtabliſhed my Title to all
" the *Bleſſings* included in the Promiſes, and all the
" *Felicity* laid up in Heaven ? And can I neglect to
" ſeek thoſe invaluable Bleſſings, or forbear to
" aſpire after this immenſe Felicity ? Can I be ſo
" *ungrateful* as to affront, ſo *inſenſible* as to forget,
" the infinitely beneficent AUTHOR of both ?
" —Am I perſuaded, that the PRINCE of Peace
" is entered into Glory as my *Forerunner* †, and has
" prepared Manſions of Bliſs for my final Recep-
" tion ? And ſhall I not follow Him thither, in my
" Hopes and my Affections ? Be as a Pilgrim be-
" low, and have my Converſation above?—Is not
" this a moſt ſweet and effectual Method of gain-
" ing my Heart ? If my Heart, then all my Powers,
" to his bleſſed Self, and ſacred Service ?"

Such, my dear *Theron*, will be the *Effects* of Faith. Therefore, it is not in vain, much leſs to the Diſcouragement of real Virtue, that the Scripture lays ſuch a Streſs upon Faith: ſo frequently urges the Importance and Neceſſity of Faith: repreſents Faith, as the principal Work of the Divine SPIRIT, and the

* Rom. xii. 1. † Heb. vi. 20.

the great Inſtrument of Salvation. Becauſe it is a ſure, a ſovereign Means of *purifying the Heart* *, and never fails to *work by Love* †.—Was Faith, as ſome People are apt to imagine, like a Candle put under a Buſhel, or like the Lamps which burn in Sepulchres; it would then be an inſignificant Labour to inculcate it, and no better than an empty Flouriſh of Words, to celebrate it. But we are infallibly aſſured, that Faith is a *vital*, an *operative*, a *victorious* Principle.

CHRIST is a Store-houſe of all Good. Whatever is neceſſary to remove our Guilt, whatever is expedient for renewing our Nature, whatever is proper to fit Us for the eternal Fruition of GOD, all this is laid up in *CHRIST*. And all this is received by Faith, for Application, Uſe, and Enjoyment.—Faith therefore is a living Principle of Holineſs, becauſe it poſſeſſes *CHRIST*, and Life in Him. Even as it is a ſure Means of Juſtification becauſe it receives *CHRIST*, and Righteouſneſs in Him.—It is likewiſe as impoſſible, for the Sun to be in his meridian Sphere, and not to diffuſe Light; as for this Faith to be exerciſed on *CHRIST*, and not to purify the Conſcience and ſanctify the Temper.

When *Zaccheus* BELIEVED, He became a new Man: his Bowels yearned with Compaſſion: the rapacious Publican was a Friend to the Needy, and a Father to the Poor ‡.—When the *Macedonians* BELIEVED, how eminently was their Spirit ennobled, and their Practice improved! Though preſſed with Affliction, their Souls overflowed with Joy; and even in the deepeſt Poverty, they ſignalized

* Acts xv. 9. † Gal. v. 6. ‡ Luke xix. 8.

themſelves by the Abundance of their Liberality *. —When the *firſt Converts* BELIEVED, the Change in their Behaviour was ſo remarkable, the Holineſs of their Lives ſo exemplary; that they won the Favour, and commanded the Reſpect, of all the People †.—In ſhort; when Faith takes place, and *CHRIST* is applied, *the Wilderneſs buds, and the Deſert bloſſoms as a Roſe. The lame Man leaps like a Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb ſings. Old Things are paſſed away, behold all Things are become new.*

That my dear *Theron* may be *eſtabliſhed* in Faith, may *increaſe* in Faith, may *abound* in Faith, is the moſt affectionate Wiſh, which Thought can ſuggeſt, or Friendſhip adopt. May his Faith therefore be eſtabliſhed like the Mountain-Oaks; increaſe like the progreſſive Stream; till it ſpreads and abounds like the all-overflowing Flood ‡!

I intended to have cloſed my Letter, and confirmed my Point, by a *very memorable* Story. But however your Patience may perſevere, my Time fails, and my Hand is weary. The next Poſt, if nothing unexpected intervenes, ſhall bring You the Sequel.

* *Cor.* viii. 2. Here is, eſpecially in the Original, as fine an *Antitheſis*, perhaps, as ever was penned. Since the preceding Notes are ſo copious, I ſhall deny myſelf the Pleaſure of particularizing the Beauties of this Clauſe. I leave it to the Lover of ſacred Literature, to admire the Apoſtle's Expreſſion, to be charmed with the Spirit of the *Macedonian* Believers, and to derive from both, Edification mixed with Delight.

† Acts ii. 47.

‡ Theſe Images We may venture to ſtyle *beautiful*, becauſe they are borrowed from the Apoſtle; βεβαιωμενοι εν τη πιστει. Col. ii. 7 προκοπη της πιστεως. Phil. i. 25. υπεραυξανει η πιστις. 2 Theſſ. i. 3.

Sequel. May it, when brought to my Friend, be as *a Nail faſtened in a ſure Place*, and give the Rivet of Conviction to all theſe important Truths!—In the mean Time, or rather at all Times, I remain

Cordially and invariably Yours,

ASPASIO.

LETTER XI.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

Dear THERON,

FAITH in the Righteouſneſs* of *JESUS CHRIST* is a fundamental Principle, in that invaluable Syſtem of ſacred and divine Philoſophy—THE GOSPEL. By which the Heavenly TEACHER is continually training up Millions of rational and immortal Creatures, for the true Perfection of their Nature; for the final Fruition of their GOD; or, in other Words, for a State of conſummate Happineſs and everlaſting Glory.—In this School, may You and I be humble *Students*, and daily *Proficients!* While Others are ambitious of glittering Diſtinctions, and ſounding Titles, may it be our higheſt Aim, to anſwer the Character—of BELIEVERS! By this Character, the Supreme LORD diſtinguiſhes his choſen People, and denominates the

* Πιστις εν δικαιοσυνη του Θεου ημων και σωτηρος, Ιησου Χριστου. 2 Pet. i. 1.

Heirs of Salvation.—This Character ſtands faireſt in the Book of Life, and moſt conſpicuous in the Annals of Eternity.—This Character, however neglected or diſeſteemed among Men, will be remembered and had in Honour, when the pompous Names of *Stateſman* and *Generaliſſimo* are known no more.

As Faith is of ſuch ſingular and extenſive Efficacy in genuine Chriſtianity, methinks, I would have all our Meditations *terminate* on its glorious Object, and be calculated to *invigorate* ſo beneficial a Principle.—And ſo much the rather, as too many of our ingenious Writers run vaſtly wide of this Mark.—They teach Us to admire the Magnitude and Diſtances of the Planets; the annual and diurnal Revolutions of the Globe. They call up our moſt pleaſed Attention to the exact Arrangement, the exquiſite Conſtruction, and moſt curious Operation, of every Wheel and every Implement, in the Machine of Nature. At the ſame Time, they more than intimate, that this is the brighteſt Mirrour, wherein We may contemplate the divine Perfections. This the Scene of Order, from whence We may derive the beſt Rules, for harmonizing the human Mind. Hence they would animate our Devotion, and hence regulate our Life. Not without apparent Neglect, I fear, with ſupercilious Contempt, of that moſt illuſtrious Diſcovery of the divine Excellencies; which was exhibited to the Children of Men, by GOD manifeſted in the Fleſh. Thus they diſcard the Goſpel, and would ſupplant the bleſſed JESUS; making the Univerſe their Bible, and Nature *their Wiſdom, their Sanctification, their Redemption.*

But,

But, bleſſed be GOD, We have not ſo learned Philoſophy. We can place her at the Foot-ſtool, not on the Throne of her LORD; and bid her proclaim his Honours, not uſurp his Office. Let Us, therefore, when we reflect on that ſtupendous Act, the Creation of the World out of Nothing; let Us remember, it was *HIS* Act, who *obtained eternal Redemption for Sinners.* When we contemplate that immenſe Theatre of Wonders, the Heavens and their ſhining Hoſts; let Us not forget, that they are all *HIS* Work, who *brought in everlaſting Righteouſneſs* for the Ungodly.—Do We turn our Thoughts to the Ocean, that ſpacious and magnificent Canal, which covers more than half the Globe? It was formed by *HIS* Word, and is obedient to *HIS* Will, who *loved Us and waſhed Us from our Sins in his own Blood.* Do We take a View of the Earth, that grand and inexhauſtible Magazine, which furniſhes ſuch a Multiplicity of Conveniencies, for ſo many Millions of Creatures? It is all *HIS* Property, and wholly at *HIS* Diſpoſal, who *emptied* * *Himſelf* for our Sake, and *had not where to lay his Head.*—For thus ſaith the inſpired Philoſopher; thus ſaith the Oracle of Revelation; *All Things were made* BY *Him, and* FOR *Him* †.

The great CREATOR has *enriched* this habitable Globe with a Profuſion of Good. He has *adorned* it with a Variety, a Regularity, and a Beauty, which are perfectly charming. He has *ennobled* it with a Dignity, a Sublimity, and a Grandeur, which are at once delightful and aſtoniſhing. In all this, Reaſon cannot but diſcern a clear Manifeſtation of Power, a bright Diſplay of Wiſdom, and a rich

* Ἐκένωσεν ἑαυτὸν. Phil. ii. 7. † Col. i. 16.

Demonſtration of Benignity.—But will the CREATOR himſelf vouchſafe to be made Fleſh; on Purpoſe that He may *bleed* and *die* for his Guilty Creatures? This is what, neither the utmoſt Penetration of Men, nor the very ſuperior Intelligence of Angels, could ever have demonſtrated, diſcovered, or conceived. This exceeds, whatever the Elements have produced, whatever the Sun has beheld; as much as the Extent and Magnificence of the planetary Syſtem, exceeds the Dimenſions and the Furniture of a Shepherd's Hut.—To reveal this, is the bleſſed Peculiarity of the Goſpel. To know and believe this, is the diſtinguiſhing Prerogative of a Chriſtian. To *apply* this, to *dwell* upon this, to *connect* this with all our Obſervations of the Univerſe, ſhould be the favourite and habitual Employ of the Believer. This will improve Wonder into Devotion, and raiſe the Entertainments of Science into the Joy of Salvation. This will render every philoſophical Speculation a Strengthener of our Faith; and make the various Scenes of Nature, a Guide to Grace, and a Step to Glory.—When this is done, then all Things attain their proper End; and as they are *by CHRIST*, ſo they are *for CHRIST*.

But I forget myſelf, my Buſineſs, and my Promiſe. I am to eſtabliſh the Point by inconteſtable Fact, not to embelliſh it by looſe Harangue. With Pleaſure I addreſs myſelf to diſcharge the Obligation; and exemplify, in a very memorable Inſtance, the *Power* of Faith on *religious* Practice.—From whence ſhall I fetch my Exemplification! From the Memoirs of the Apoſtle of the Gentiles? Here I find one, moſt conciſely, and at the ſame Time moſt forcibly diſplayed,

Obſerve

Obſerve this Man in his unconverted State. He *breathes out Threatnings and Slaughter* againſt the Chriſtians. Can any Thing denote a more iniquitous and ſavage Temper? The roaring Lion, and the ranging Bear, are gentle Creatures, compared with this Monſter in human Shape.—Still the Deſcription of his Barbarity heightens. *I was exceedingly mad againſt them; I compelled them to blaſpheme; and puniſhed them in every Synagogue.* The Practice, not of a Man, but of a Fiend! 'Tis the very Picture of an incarnate Devil.—What has this infernal Wretch, that may recommend Him to the divine Favour? If ever there was a Sinner on Earth, that had ſinned beyond the Reach of Mercy, beyond the Poſſibility of Pardon, ſurely it muſt be this *Saul* of *Tarſus*.

But the divine Mercy, diſdaining all Limits, is overflowing and unmeaſurable. Where Sin has abounded like a Flood, divine Mercy abounds like an Ocean. The Favour of Man is backward to interpoſe, till ſomething amiable or inviting appears in the Object. But the Grace of GOD is immenſely rich and infinitely free. It prevents the moſt vile and hardened Rebels. It brings every Requiſite and Recommendation, in its own unſpeakably beneficent Nature. It accompliſhes all its bleſſed Ends, not by any towardly Diſpoſition in the Sinner, but by that one glorious Righteouſneſs provided in the SAVIOUR.—This overtook the Perſecutor on his Journey to *Damaſcus*. Light and Life were poured upon Him, not from any Dawn of Reformation in Himſelf, but from a very different Quarter. By opening, as it were, a Window in Heaven, while He was ſojourning even in the Suburbs of

of Hell. *He ſaw that JUST ONE.* He received the ineſtimable Gift. He was made Partaker of the Salvation, which is in JESUS CHRIST.

See, now, what *Effect* this Faith has upon his Conduct. It cauſes a total Revolution in the Sentiments of his Mind. It gives a new Biaſs to every Faculty of his Soul. It introduces an abſolute Change into the whole Tenour of his Behaviour. As great and marvelous a Change, as if You ſhould behold ſome mighty Torrent, turned by the Shock of an Earthquake; and rolling thoſe Waters to the Eaſt, which, from the Beginning of Time, had flowed inceſſantly to the Weſt. He adores that JESUS, whom He lately blaſphemed. He preaches that Faith, which He once deſtroyed. And He is ready to lay down his Life for thoſe Believers, whom not long ago He perſecuted unto Death.

It may be ſaid; Is the Change as *laſting*, as it is ſurpriſing? We will only conſider the converted *Saul*, in one very remarkable Point of Light.—*After theſe Things were ended*, ſays the ſacred Hiſtorian, *Paul purpoſed in the Spirit, when he had paſſed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jeruſalem, ſaying, After I have been there, I muſt alſo ſee Rome* *.—Who can obſerve, and not admire, this plain unambitious Manner of relating a Series of Labours, the moſt ſignally ſucceſsful, and the moſt extenſively uſeful? Nothing in human Conduct ever ſurpaſſed the *Greatneſs* of the one, and perhaps nothing in hiſtorical Compoſition ever equaled the *Simplicity* of the Other.

St.

* Acts xix. 21.

St. *Paul* had already reduced *Epheſus* and *Aſia* to the Obedience of *CHRIST*. He had already brought *Macedonia* and *Achaia* into Subjection to the Goſpel. He had long ago erected the Standard, and ſpread the Triumphs of Chriſtianity, in the Regions of *Arabia*. Yet, as if He had hitherto atchieved nothing, He bends his Forces towards *Jeruſalem*. Then he marks out *Rome* for the Seat of his ſpiritual Warfare. After this, he forms the ſame beneficent Deſign upon *Spain*: including, in his comprehenſive Plan, the Metropolis and the Boundaries * of the known World.—The Univerſe is but juſt large enough, to be the Scene of his Activity and Zeal; He never diſcontinues the *charitable Campaign*, but with the laſt Breath of his Life; and He ſpeaks of this unintermitted Courſe of arduous and dangerous Services, as if He was only going to make ſome friendly *Viſit*, or join in a Party of innocent *Pleaſure*; *After I have been at Jeruſalem, I muſt alſo ſee Rome* †.

Which

* *Spain* was then ſuppoſed to be the Boundary of the *Weſtern*, as the *Ganges* was reckoned the Extremity of the *Eaſtern* World.

Omnibus in Terris quæ ſunt a Gadibus uſque
Auroram & Gangen. Juv. Sat. X.

† I am quite charmed, I muſt confeſs, with this very *ſimple*, but incomparably *gallant* Manner of the Apoſtle's ſpeaking. Far beyond all the Pomp of Panegyric, it diſplays the Hero.

When a Handful of *Spartans* undertook to defend the Paſs of *Thermopylæ*, againſt the whole Army of *Perſia*; ſo prodigious, it was reported, were the Multitudes of the *Perſians*, that the very Flight of their Arrows would intercept the Shining of the Sun. *Then*, ſaid *Dieneces* one of the *Spartan* Leaders, *We ſhall have the Advantage of fighting*

Which of your *Alexanders*, which of your *Cæſars*, which of all the Heroes renowned in *Grecian* or *Roman* Story, can vie with the Zeal and Magnanimity of this poor, deſpiſed Tent-maker? So *poor*, that he

fighting in the Shade.—Juſt before the Battle of *Agincourt*, News was brought to King *Henry*'s Camp, that the *French* were exceedingly numerous. That they would bring into the Field, more than ſix times the Number of the *Engliſh* Troops. To which the brave Captain *Gam* immediately replied, *Is it ſo? Then there are enough to be cut in Pieces, enough to be taken Priſoners, and enough to run away.*—A commanding Officer, I think, among the Royaliſts, being beſieged by the parliamentary Forces, was ſummoned to ſurrender the Caſtle. The Summons He rejected. Upon which, the Enemy threatened, that, if He perſiſted in his Reſolution, the Walls ſhould, without farther Delay, be battered to the Ground. *What if they are?* was his blunt Anſwer, *I am not obliged to rebuild them.*—Sir *Thomas More*, ſometime Lord Chancellor of *England*, fell into Diſgrace with his Sovereign, and was committed to the Tower. On which Occaſion, the Lieutenant of the Tower made an Apology for the Diet, Lodging, and Accommodations, as unſuitable to the Dignity of ſo great a Man. *No Apology, Sir*, replies the courtly Priſoner: *I don't queſtion, but I ſhall like your Accommodations very well. And if You once hear me complain, I give You free Leave to turn me out of Doors.*

Such calm Sentiments, ſo cool and ſedate a Temper, amidſt Circumſtances of the moſt imminent Danger or the greateſt Diſtreſs, argue an uncommon *Fortitude* and *Superiority* of Mind. But, if We conſider the Nature of the Apoſtle's Enterprize; that it was nothing leſs than an open Attack on the Empire of Satan; a declared War againſt the whole idolatrous World; all which was to commence in Reproach and Perſecution; was to be attended with Bonds and Afflictions; was to end in Martyrdom and Death.—If We conſider this, I believe, nothing will appear, at once ſo humble and ſo exalted, ſo modeſt yet ſo magnanimous, as the Turn and Air of *his* Expreſſion; *After I have been at Jeruſalem, I muſt alſo ſee Rome.*

he was conſtrained to work with his own Hands, for a Morſel of Bread: ſo *deſpiſed*, that He was frequently treated as the Offscouring of all Things. Notwithſtanding all theſe Diſcouragements, what did he not attempt, what did He not accompliſh * for the Honour of his MASTER, and the Good of his Fellow-creatures?—He embarks in a Shallop; He has neither Shield nor Spear; yet he purpoſes to command the Ocean, and conquer the Globe. What *Greatneſs* of Soul was here! He expects † nothing but Poverty, Contempt, and Death; yet his Heart is big with the Hope of enriching, ennobling, and ſaving Ages and Generations. What *Benevolence* of Temper was this!—Should you inquire, concerning this illuſtrious Champion of the Croſs; *Who* were his potent Auxiliaries? None but the Divine SPIRIT.—*What* were his mighty Weapons? Nothing but the Word of Truth and Grace.—*Whence* proceeded his intrepid, his enterprizing, his all-conquering Reſolution? Only from Faith, a lively Faith in *JESUS CHRIST*.

This, I think, is a ſufficient Confirmation of my Doctrine.—Nevertheleſs I have another Inſtance to produce. One that was exhibited in an Age, when the glorious Object of our Faith ſhone with dim Luſtre, and with diſtant Beams. Yet it may juſtly be

* Ω τȣ μεγαλοπραγμονος ανθρωπȣ, ſaid King *Ageſilaus*, when He ſaw *Epaminondas*, the *Spartan* Hero, marching at the Head of his Troops. But never was there a human Character, whom this high Encomium ſo exactly ſuited, as the Character and Conduct of the Apoſtle *Paul*. Of Him it will be ſaid, and throughout all Generations, *What hath GOD wrought* by this Man!

† Acts xx. 23.

be admired, and will hardly be eclipſed, by the moſt inlightened among the *Chriſtian* Saints.—To keep You no longer in Suſpence, the Caſe I mean, is that which *Moſes* records, and the Apoſtle celebrates. BY FAITH *Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Iſaac: and He that had received the Promiſes, offered up his only begotten Son* *.—As this is ſo ſingular an Example of the efficacious and triumphant Operation of Faith; unequaled in any Nation of the World, or under any Diſpenſation of Religion; You will give me leave to dwell a little on ſome of its marvelous Circumſtances.

Abraham was an eminent and diſtinguiſhed Servant of the Moſt High GOD. Favoured with peculiar Manifeſtations of the Divine Will, and dignified with the honourable Title of his MAKER's Friend †. Yet even this Man, is haraſſed with a long Succeſſion of Troubles; and, which was reckoned in thoſe Ages the moſt deplorable Calamity, *goes childleſs* ‡.

Long He waits, worſhiping GOD with the moſt patient Reſignation. At length, an Oracle from the

* Heb. xi. 17. † 2 Chron. xx. 7. Iſai. xli. 8.

‡ There was ſo much Gall in this Calamity, that it embittered every other Species of Happineſs. Viſited by this Affliction, the Patriarch could taſte no Joy in his late ſignal Victory; all his worldly Proſperity was inſipid; and he ſeems to have been incapable of reliſhing any other Comfort; *What wilt thou give me, ſeeing I go childleſs?* Gen. xv. 2.—I would intreat the Reader to take particular Notice of *this* Circumſtance. It will have the ſame Effect upon the Repreſentation of *Abraham*'s Obedience, and the whole Series of his Difficulties, as *a magnifying* Glaſs has upon the Objects to which it is applied.

the LORD gives Him Hope, gives Him Aſſurance of a Son. Joyfully he receives the Promiſe, and reſts in humble Expectation of its Accompliſhment. —Several Years run their Rounds, but no pleaſing Infant prattles in his Arms, or is dandled upon his Knees. At laſt, the Handmaid becomes pregnant. But what a *Diſappointment* was here! This is the Son of the Bondwoman, not of the free.

How afflicting the Caſe of this excellent Perſon! His Kinsfolk and Acquaintance ſee their Olive-branches, flouriſhing round about their Tables. Even his ungodly Neighbours have Children at their Deſire, and leave the Reſidue of their Subſtance for their Babes. But *Abraham*, the Worſhiper of JEHOVAH, the Favourite of Heaven —this *Abraham* is deſtitute of an Heir, to ſupport his Name, to propagate his Family, or to inherit the Bleſſing.—O the Straits! to which the Believer is ſometimes reduced! How does a ſovereign Providence try his Faith, as it were in a Furnace of Fire! Not that it may be conſumed, but refined, and come forth with augmented Luſtre; to the Praiſe of *ever-faithful*, *all-ſufficient* Grace.

GOD is pleaſed to renew the Grant, and aſſure Him more explicitly, That *Sarah* ſhall have a Son. But this Notice comes at a very late Period in Life; when *Sarah* is advanced in Years, and too old, according to the Courſe of Nature, to conceive. However, the pious Patriarch *ſtaggers not through Unbelief*; but *hopes even againſt Hope**.—Is it improbable? Is it difficult? Nay, is it to all human Appearance impoſſible? So much the more proper, for Faith to expect, and for Omnipotence to accompliſh.

At

* Rom. iv. 18, 20.

At laſt, the Gift, ſo earneſtly deſired, is vouchſafed. *Sarah* has a *Child*—a *Son*—an *Iſaac*. One who ſhould be a Source of Conſolation and Delight to his Parents; ſhould *fill their Mouth with Laughter* *, *and their Tongue with Joy*.—With tender Care, doubtleſs, this pleaſant Plant is reared. Many Prayers are put up, for his long Life, and great Happineſs. The fond Parents watch over Him, as over the Apple of their own Eye. *Their* Life is bound up in the Life of the Lad †.—He grows in Grace, as he grows in Stature. So amiable is his Temper, and ſo engaging his Behaviour, as could not fail of endearing him even to a Stranger; how much more to ſuch indulgent Parents, after ſo long a State of Barrenneſs, and ſo many Expectations ſo frequently fruſtrated.

Now, methinks, we are ready to congratulate the happy Sire; and flatter Ourſelves, that his Tribulations have an End. That the Storms, which ruffled the Noon of Life, are blown over; and the Evening of his Age, is becoming calm and ſerene.—But *let not Him that girdeth on his Harneſs, boaſt Himſelf, as He that putteth it off* ‡. Our Warfare on Earth is never accompliſhed, till We bow our Head, and give up the Ghoſt. The ſharpeſt, the ſevereſt Tryal is ſtill behind.

Abraham §; ſays GOD—*Abraham* knows the Voice. It is the Voice of condeſcending Goodneſs. He

* *Pſal.* cxxvi. 2. This is the Import of the *Hebrew* Name *Iſaac*.

† Gen. xliv. 30. ‡ 1 Kings xx. 11.

§ The Sentence, with which the inſpired Hiſtorian introduces this affecting Narrative, is unhappily tranſlated in our Bibles; נסה את אברהם *GOD* did *tempt Abraham*.

He had often heard it with a Rapture of Delight.—Inſtantly He replies, "*Here I am.* Speak, LORD; "for thy Servant is all Attention." Hoping, no doubt, to receive ſome freſh Manifeſtation of the divine *Good-will*, to Himſelf and his Family; or ſome new Diſcovery of the Method, in which the divine *Wiſdom* would accompliſh the Promiſes, *I will multiply thy Seed—I will make thy Seed as the Duſt of the Earth.—In thy Seed ſhall all the Families of the Earth be bleſſed.*

Take thy Son; adds GOD. And might not *Abraham* reaſonably expect, that, ſince his Son was arrived to Years of Maturity, He ſhould be directed, How to ſettle Him in the World with Honour and Advantage; Where to find a virtuous and fruitful Partner of his Cares, his Joys, and his Bed?—He is commanded, not barely to take his *Son*, but his *only* Son; his Son *Iſaac*; whom He *loved*. How muſt theſe affecting Images awaken all that ſoft Complacency, and all that tender Triumph, which are known only to the fond feeling Apprehenſions of a Parent! Muſt not ſuch an Introduction, ſo remarkably endearing, heighten his Expectation of ſome ſignal Mercy, to be conferred on the beloved

ham—This Expreſſion ſeems, more than ſeems to claſh with the Doctrine of St. *James*, Chap. i. ver. 13. And cannot but ſound harſh to thoſe Ears, which have been accuſtomed to underſtand by *Tempter* and *Tempting*, Perſons utterly odious, and Practices extremely pernicious. —Whereas, the true and natural Signification of the Original is, He *tried* or *explored*. GOD ſounded the Depth, and meaſured the Height of his Servant's Faith; in order to erect an everlaſting Monument of the victorious Efficacy of this ſacred Principle; and exhibit an illuſtrious Pattern to all them, who ſhould hereafter believe.

Youth; and would it not render the Bleſſing peculiarly acceptable, more than doubly welcome?

Was he not then ſtartled? Was he not horribly amazed? When, inſtead of ſome renewed Expreſſion of the Divine Favour, He received the following Orders. *Take now thy Son—thy only Son*—Iſaac—*whom Thou loveſt—and get Thee into the Land of* Moriah, *and offer Him there for a Burnt-offering, upon one of the Mountains which I will tell thee of* *. Was ever Deſcription ſo affecting, or Meſſage ſo alarming? Does GOD create the Apple of the Eye, only to be a Sheath for the Dagger? Does He impart the utmoſt Senſibility, only to inflict the moſt agonizing Pain? Every Word in this Injunction, ſoftens and entenders the Parent's Heart; and, at the ſame Time, ſharpens the Arrow, that muſt pierce it through and through.

Where now, *Abraham*, are all thy pleaſing Proſpects? How often didſt thou ſay, in thy enamoured and delighted Heart; "*This ſame ſhall comfort Us* "*concerning our Trouble* †. Many have been my "Sorrows; but this Child, this dear Child, ſhall "dry up my Tears, and bring me to my Grave in "Peace."—Alaſs! this lovely Flower is to be cut down, in its faireſt fulleſt Bloom. All thy ſhining Hopes are overcaſt in a Moment. They are covered with Darkneſs and the Shadow of Death.—But let Us attend to the tragical Story.

Abraham, take thy Son.—Who, but *Abraham*, could have forbore remonſtrating and pleading, on ſuch an Occaſion?—*Ananias*, being charged with a Commiſſion to *Saul* the Perſecutor, takes upon Him to argue the Caſe with his Almighty SOVEREIGN. *LORD*,

* Gen. xxii. 2. † Gen. v. 29.

LORD, I have heard by Many concerning this Man, how much Evil He hath done to thy Saints at Jeruſalem; and here He hath Authority from the chief Prieſts, to bind all that call upon thy Name *. It can never be ſafe or expedient, to preſent myſelf voluntarily before Him; who came hither breathing out Threatenings and Slaughter againſt me. What is this, but to court Danger; and run, with open Eyes, into Ruin?—Thus *Ananias*. With how much greater Appearance of Reaſon, might *Abraham* have replied?

" *LORD*, have I not already left my Coun-
" try; left my Kindred; and, at thy Command,
" left my Father's Houſe? And wilt Thou now
" bereave me of my Child? Muſt I part, not with
" ſome admired Folly or darling Vanity, but with
" the moſt worthy Object of a rational Affection?
" Indeed with my only remaining Conſolation?

" Shall I be deprived of my Child, almoſt as
" ſoon as I have received Him? Didſt Thou give
" Him, only to tantalize thy Servant? Remem-
" ber, gracious GOD, the Name he bears.
" *How* ſhall He anſwer its chearing Import? *How*
" ſhall He be a Source of Satisfaction to his Parents,
" or the Father of many Nations; if Thou takeſt
" Him away, in his unmarried State, and the very
" Prime of his Years?

" If Sin lies at the Door, let me *expiate* the
" Guilt. Let thouſands of Rams, let every Bul-
" lock in my Stalls, bleed at thy Altar. My
" Wealth, moſt mighty LORD, and all my Goods,
" are *nothing* in compariſon of my *Iſaac*. Command
" me to be ſtript of my Poſſeſſions; command me

* Acts ix. 13, 14.

" to roam, as a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the " Earth; and I will bleſs thy holy Name. Only " let my Child, my dear Child, be ſpared.

" Or, if nothing will appeaſe thy Indignation " but human Blood, let *my Death* be the Sacrifice. " Upon me be the Vengeance. I am old and grey- " headed. The beſt of my Days are paſt, and the " beſt of my Services done. If this tottering Wall " tumbles, there will be little, or no Cauſe for " Regret. But, if the Pillar of my Houſe, and " the Support of my Family—if *He* be ſnatched " from me, what Good will my Life do me? *O my* " *Son! my Son! would GOD I might die for Thee* *.

" If it muſt be a blooming Youth, in the Flower " of his Days, be pleaſed, moſt merciful GOD, " to ſelect the Victim from ſome *fruitful* Family. " There are thoſe, who abound in Children. " Children are multiplied unto them; and though " many were removed, yet would their Table be " full. There are thoſe, who have Flocks and " Herds; whereas, I have only this one little " Lamb †; the very Solace of my Soul, and the " Stay of my declining Years. And ſhall this be " taken away, while all *thoſe* are left?"

Yes, *Abraham*; it is *thy* Son, and not Another's, that is marked for the Victim.—What Diſtreſs, had He not been ſupported by Faith, what exquiſite Diſtreſs muſt have overwhelmed this affectionate Parent! How could He refrain from crying out, and with a Flood of Tears?—" If the Decree can- " not be reverſed; if it muſt be the Fruit of my " own Body; O! that *Iſhmael*, the Son of the " Handmaid—How ſhall I ſpeak it? My Heart " bleeds

* 2 Sam. xviii. 33. † 2 Sam. xii. 3.

" bleeds at the Thought; at the Thought even of " *his* expiring Agonies, and untimely Death. But " as for *Iſaac*, the Son of my beloved Spouſe, the " Son of my old Age, the Crown of all my La- " bours—How ſhall I ſurvive ſuch a Loſs?

" *My Bowels! My Bowels! I am pained at my* " *very Heart.* If it was only to diſmiſs Him into " ſome foreign Country, and not to ſee his Face " for many Years; even this would be a ſore " Tryal. But to loſe Him by the Stroke of Death; " to have Him cut off out of the Land of the Liv- " ing! Will not the Blow that diſpatches Him, " be fatal to Us both?

" Yet, if He *muſt* die, and there is no Remedy; " may He not at leaſt expire by a natural Diſſolu- " tion? May not ſome common Diſtemper unlooſe " the Cords of Life, and lay Him down gently in " the Tomb? May not his fond Mother and myſelf " ſeal his cloſing Eyes, and ſoften his dying Pangs " by our tender Offices?"

No, *Abraham.* Thy Son muſt be *ſlaughtered* on the Altar. He ſhall have no other Bed of Death, than the Pile of hewn Wood; no other Winding-ſheet, than his own clotted Gore. The ſacrificing Knife, and not any common Diſeaſe, ſhall bring Him to his End.—And think not to ſatisfy thy ſorrowing Fondneſs, by paying Him the laſt Honours of a decent Interment. It is the LORD's Will, that He be cut in Pieces; conſumed to Aſhes; and made a *Burnt-offering.* So that nothing ſhall remain, to be preſerved, or embalmed. It ſhall not be in thy Power to ſooth thy Grief, by reſorting to his Grave; and weeping at his Sepulchre; and ſaying—*Here lies Iſaac.*

" But if all muſt be executed; GOD forbid, " that I ſhould behold the diſmal Tragedy! If " my *Iſaac* muſt be bound Hand and Foot for the " Slaughter; if He muſt receive the Steel into his " Boſom; and welter in his own innocent Blood; " O! let it be far, far from the Sight of theſe " Eyes!"

Even this Mitigation cannot be granted. Thou, *Abraham*, thou thyſelf muſt ſtand by; muſt look on; muſt ſee Him ſlain.—Nay; Thou muſt not only be an Eye-witneſs of his Agony, but be the *Executioner* of thy *Iſaac*. Yes; *thy* Hands muſt lift the deadly Weapon; *thy* Hands muſt point it to the beloved Breaſt; *thy own* Hands muſt urge its Way, through the guſhing Veins, and the ſhivering Fleſh, till it be plunged in the throbbing Heart. GOD will not permit the Work to be done by Another. The Father, the Father muſt be the Murtherer.

Is not the wretched Father *ſtunned* and *thunder-ſtruck*? Does He not ſtand fixed in Horror, and ſpeechleſs with Grief. What Words can be mournful enough to expreſs his Sorrows?—To murther a Son! Is it not impious, execrable, ſhocking? Nature *recoils* at the very Thought! How then can the beſt of Fathers perform the Deed?

How ſhall He anſwer it to the Wife of his Boſom, the Mother of the lovely Youth? Who bore Him in her Womb; who brought Him forth with Pain; and nurſed Him up, amidſt the fondeſt Careſſes. Will She not have Reaſon to reproach *Abraham*, and ſay in the Anguiſh of her Spirit; *A bloody Huſband haſt thou been to me**.

How

* Exod. iv. 25.

How can He juſtify it to the World? They will never be perſuaded, that the GOD of Goodneſs can delight in Cruelty, or authorize ſo horrid an Action.—Will they not take up a *taunting* Proverb, and ſay at every Turn? "There goes the Man, "the Monſter rather, that has imbrued his Hands "in the Blood of his own Son! This is He that "pretends to Piety; and yet could be ſo ſavage, "as to aſſaſſinate, cooly and deliberately aſſaſſinate "an only Child!"—Might not Thouſands of ſuch Conſiderations, croud into his Thoughts, and rack his very Soul?

But GOD is unchangeable. Poſitive is his Word, and muſt be obeyed. Obeyed immediately too. Take *now* thy Son. The LORD's Command requireth Speed. No Time is to be loſt, in bidding Adieu to his Relations, or in fruitleſs Supplications for revoking the Doom.—Prodigious Tryal! Was ever Precept like this Precept?—Yet, when JEHOVAH enjoins, to deliberate, is Diſloyalty; to diſpute, is Rebellion.

This the Patriarch knew. Therefore He waits not for a ſecond Injunction.—He knew alſo, that Obedience is no Obedience, unleſs it be *willing* and *chearful*. Therefore He conſults not with Fleſh and Blood. He is deaf to the Arguings of carnal Reaſon, and regards not the Yearnings of paternal Affection. But, without a murmuring Word, without a Moment's Delay, ſets forward on his Journey. Not ſo much as betraying the leaſt Uneaſineſs, to alarm his Wife; nor heaving the leaſt Sigh, to create Suſpicion in his Attendants.

And canſt thou, *Abraham*, canſt thou perſiſt in thy Purpoſe? Can thy Heart firmly reſolve, can thy Hand

ſteadily execute? Execute this inexpreſſibly ſevere Taſk?—Is not this Child the Heir of the Promiſes, both temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal?—Is not the great MESSIAH, whoſe Day thou haſt ſo paſſionately deſired to ſee; whoſe Perſon is the Hope of all the Ends of the Earth; is not that great MESSIAH to ſpring from his Loins? From *his* Loins, whom thou art about to kill?—The Bleſſing, thou knoweſt, is appropriated to Him. The grand Entail is ſettled upon Him—upon *Iſaac* by Name—upon *Iſaac alone.* If He periſh, all is loſt.—Canſt thou, then, at one Blow, deſtroy the Life of thy Son; ſacrifice all thy earthly Joys; and cut off the Hopes of the whole World?—Will none of theſe Conſiderations diſcourage, diſſuade, deter thee?

Moſt triumphant Faith indeed! Deſervedly art thou ſtyled, *The Father of the Faithful.* Thy Faith is ſtronger than all the Ties of Affection; ſtronger than all the Pleas of Nature; ſtronger than all the Terrors of Death—of a Death, in its Circumſtances and in its Conſequences, incomparably more dreadful than thy own.

Now muſt He travel, during three tedious, and, one would think, moſt melancholy Days. With his *Iſaac* conſtantly before his Eyes; with the tragical Scene, continually preſenting itſelf to his Apprehenſions; and nothing to divert his Mind, from dwelling upon every afflictive Incident.—Thus muſt He travel, aged as He is, to a great Diſtance; in Suſpence and Uncertainty all the while. Not knowing, where the fatal Buſineſs is to be tranſacted; whether in a private Spot, or on a public Stage. Only on one of the *Mountains which the LORD will tell Him of.*—There ſeems

to

to be a Combination of all Things, in order to aggravate the Tryal; and urge Him to Diſquietude, if not to Diſtraction.

On the third Day, Abraham *lift up his Eyes, and ſaw the Place afar off.* Doleful Sight! The Slaughter-Houſe of his Son! Does not the Proſpect alarm all his tender Paſſions? No; it only awakens his Circumſpection. The Servants are commanded to advance no farther. Here they muſt take their Stand, and keep their Diſtance. Leſt a well-meaning, but unſeaſonable Compaſſion, ſhould prompt them to interpoſe.—He Himſelf, with the Fire and the Knife in his Hands; and his Son, with the Burden of Wood on his Shoulders, *went both of them together.* —Who does not pity the dear devoted Youth, toiling under that Load, which muſt ſoon reek with his Blood, and ſoon reduce him to Aſhes?—Mean while the intended Victim, wondering to ſee all theſe Preparations made, and no proper Animal near, aſks this pertinent Queſtion; *My Father, behold the Fire and the Wood! But where is the Lamb for a Burnt-offering?* Nothing could be more tender and moving than this Speech; which diſcovered ſuch a Knowledge of Religion, and ſuch a Concern for its Duties. Will not this rouſe the Father's Anguiſh, and ſhake his Determination? How can He be the Death of ſo much Innocence, and ſo much Piety?

Faith overcomes all Difficulties. Unmoved and inflexible, the Patriarch replies; *GOD will provide Himſelf a Lamb for a Burnt-offering, my Son* *. He hides

* *Abraham* in this Anſwer, like many of the other Prophets in their Predictions, ſeems not to have *thoroughly underſtood* the Import of his own Words. What He Himſelf

hides the awful Tidings from the inquiſitive Youth, leſt they ſhould be too heavy and afflictive for Him to bear. Of his own Firmneſs and Perſeverance He was ſufficiently aſſured. But who can tell, whether *Iſaac*'s Courage and Self-denial may be equal to ſuch a Shock? Therefore He ſmothers the Brand in his own Breaſt; and forbears, as long as poſſible, to diſcloſe the terrible Secret. *So they went both of them together.* The One, wondering at the Strangeneſs of the Affair, and "not knowing "that it is for his Life." The Other, with a Fire pent up in his Bones; and fearing more to reveal, than to execute the Work.

And they came to the Place, which GOD had told him of. 'Tis a Mountain. Far from the Reſort of Men. A doleful Solitude indeed! Gloomy Shades, and hoary Trees; ragged Rocks, and hideous Precipices; the Sound of headlong Cataracts, mingled with the Yell of ravenous Beaſts; have made ſome Mountains extremely formidable. But all theſe Circumſtances, wild and tremendous as they are, could never create a Terror, comparable to the Sadneſs and Horrour of this ſingle Thought: "Here my *Iſaac* muſt bleed; on this Eminence He "breathes his laſt."

I ſhould

ſelf meant, I apprehend, is repreſented in the following Paraphraſe of his Speech. Yet GOD ſo over-ruled his Tongue, that it more fully expreſſed the divine Decree, than the parental Idea.

GOD will provide Himſelf a Lamb for a Burnt-offering, my Son. Thus the Words are placed in the *Hebrew*. *My Son* comes laſt, and cloſes the Reply. That the tender Accents may be left to vibrate on the Father's Ear, and the dear diſtreſſing Image continue playing before his Mind.—This, I think, is a Delicacy not to be overlooked, and increaſes the Pathos of the Narrative.

I ſhould not wonder to ſee the Patriarch overwhelmed with Conſternation. His Thoughts loſt in a Tumult of Fear, Trepidation, and Perplexity. So as not to know, either where to begin; or how to proceed; or what to do. But *Abraham* is all Compoſure. He diſpatches the preparatory Buſineſs, without the leaſt Heſitation, or the leaſt Precipitancy. As calmly, as when, "rich in Cattle, "in Silver, and in Gold," He reared his Tent between *Bethel* and *Hai*.

Abraham *builds an Altar there*. An Altar, ſpacious, ſtrong, and regular. Spacious, that it may receive, ſtrong, that it may ſuſtain, the Victim; and regular, that every Thing may be tranſacted with the utmoſt Decorum *. Nay; *He lays the Wood in Order*. Not huddles it together, with Haſte and Confuſion, into a rude Heap; but places each Piece in the propereſt Situation, to admit the Flames, and accelerate the Conſumption of the Sacrifice.—How muſt this ſlow Proceſs, and all theſe ſolemn Formalities, afford Leiſure for Reflection to ſtrike deep, and employ all her Stings!

Every Thing is now ready for the moſt aſtoniſhing and dreadful Act of Obedience, that Men or Angels ever beheld. And now *Abraham* diſcloſes the ſtartling Secret: "Didſt thou enquire concern-"ing the Lamb? Thou thyſelf, my dear Child, art "the Lamb provided for the Burnt-Offering.—Be "not amazed. Let not thy Heart fail.—The "GOD,

* The Scriptures are generally conciſe in their Narratives. But the Relation of this Story is remarkably *circumſtantial*. The more effectually to engage our Attention, and intereſt our Affections; as well as the more illuſtriouſly to diſplay the numerous Difficulties, and the preſſing Tryals, which the heroic Patriarch encountred —ſurmounted—triumphed over.

"GOD, who beſtowed thee on my longing De-
"ſires, is pleaſed to require thee again at my Hand.
"—The LORD gave, and the LORD taketh
"away, let Us both adore the Name of the
"LORD.—Let Us confide in his promiſed Good-
"neſs, and unanimouſly profeſs, *Though He ſlay me,*
"*yet will I truſt in Him.*"

It does not appear, that the amiable Youth *reſiſted* or *gainſayed*. He had Strength enough to oppoſe, and Speed enough to eſcape *, the Attempts of an aged Father. Either or both of which, the Law of Self-preſervation might ſeem to dictate, and the Light of Reaſon to juſtify. But *Iſaac* knew, that his Father was a Prophet. In this prophetical Character, He ſees and acknowledges the Warrant of Heaven. And ſince his CREATOR calls, He is content to go.—Excellent *Iſaac!* Who does not admire thy Courage? Who is not charmed with thy Reſignation? And muſt We, in a few Minutes, muſt We ſee Thee a pale, a bloody, a breathleſs Corpſe?

Methinks, I ſhudder as We draw near the direful Cataſtrophe. The Father knows not how to relent, and the Son offers his † willing Throat to the Knife.—Nevertheleſs, that the Work of Deſtiny may be ſure, and no one Particular relating to a Sacrifice omitted, Abraham *binds* Iſaac *his Son*.

I have

* According to *Joſephus*, *Iſaac was*, when He ſubmitted Himſelf to the Slaughter, about twenty-five Years old. Others think, his Age was thirty-three; which makes Him more exactly reſemble his ſuffering LORD. Then his Father muſt be above a hundred and thirty Years old. Either Account will juſtify *Aſpaſio*'s Suppoſition.

† *His willing*—Ισαακ μετα πεποιθησεως ηδεως συνηλθε θυσια, *Clem. Rom. ad Corinth.*

I have known a ſtubborn Malefactor, quite unalarmed, when ſentenced to the ignominious Tree; not at all impreſſed, with the moſt awful Repreſentations of eternal Judgment; yet, when a Perſon came to meaſure him for his *Coffin*, the hardened Wretch was hard no longer. He ſtarted; turned pale; and trembled in every Joint.—Even ſuch a Circumſtance makes no Impreſſion on *Abraham*; neither alters his Purpoſe, nor changes his Countenance. He meaſures his *Iſaac*; meaſures thoſe Limbs, which He had ſo frequently embraced, and ſo tenderly careſſed; if not for the Coffin, yet for immediate Slaughter.

Having bound Him—ſurpriſing Reſolution!—bound Him for the Sword and for the Flame, He *lays Him upon the Altar on the Wood.* There, now, lies *Iſaac*; the dear, the dutiful, the religious *Iſaac! Abraham*'s Joy; *Sarah*'s Delight; the Heir of the Promiſes! There He lies, all meek and reſigned; expecting, every Moment, the Stroke of Death to fall.—O Parents! Parents! Do not your Bowels yearn? Is not Humanity itſelf diſtreſſed at the Scene?—Say, thou who art a Father, what thinkeſt Thou of *Abraham*'s Obedience? Couldſt Thou, to *ſuch* a Son, have acted *ſuch* a Part?

See! the Father, reſolute to the very laſt, unſheaths the murdering Blade; makes bare the innocent Boſom; and marks the Place, where Life may find the ſpeedieſt Exit. *His Heart is fixed!* He *ſtretches forth his Hand*; He lifts the ſharpened Steel; and determined to finiſh at a Blow, is even now aiming—When—rejoice O ye Worſhipers of a gracious GOD! Break forth into Singing, Ye that are in Pain for the tried Parent! The LORD Almighty

Almighty interpoſes, in this Article of extreme Need *. The ANGEL of the Covenant ſpeaks from Heaven, and with-holds the Patriarch's Hand, in the very Act to ſtrike. GOD, who only intended to *manifeſt* his Faith, and make it *honourable*, bids Him *do no Harm to the Lad.* Yea; GOD applauds his Obedience; and ſubſtitutes another Sacrifice in *Iſaac's* Stead; renews his Covenant with the Father, and not only reprieves the Life of the Son, but promiſes Him a numerous and illuſtrious Iſſue. Promiſes to make him the Progenitor of the MESSIAH, and thereby a Bleſſing to all the Nations of the Earth.

Tell me now, *Theron*, was there ever ſuch an aſtoniſhing Effort of Obedience? Such a perfect Prodigy of Reſignation? YET THIS HATH FAITH DONE †.—If you ſhould aſk, How was it poſſible for

* Upon this moſt ſeaſonable Interpoſition, the inſpired Hiſtorian makes a very judicious and edifying Remark. Which ſeems to be greatly obſcured, if not intirely ſpoiled, by our Tranſlation; *In the Mount of the LORD it ſhall be ſeen.* I muſt confeſs, I have always been puzzled to find, not only a pertinent Senſe, but any Senſe at all, in theſe Words. Whereas, the Original is as clear in its Signification, as it is appoſite to the Purpoſe.—בהר יהוה יראה *In the Mount the LORD will be ſeen*; or, *In the Mount the LORD will provide.* q. d. "This memorable Event gave Riſe to, at leaſt is an emi-"nent Exemplification of, that *proverbial* Expreſſion, "which is commonly uſed at this Day. In the Mount "of Difficulty, or in the very Criſis of Need, when "Matters ſeem to be irretrievable and deſperate, *then* "the LORD will appear as a preſent Help. Man's Ex-"tremity is GOD's Opportunity." See *Gen.* xxii. 14.

† Heb. xi. 17. *By Faith, Abraham, when He was tried, offered up Iſaac.*—The Faith, of which ſuch glorious Things

for *Abraham* to perform all this, in the Manner deſcribed? The Anſwer is obvious. Becauſe *Abraham* BELIEVED; or in other Words, was fully perſuaded, that the Arm of the LORD, which had raiſed this Son from the *barren* Womb, was able to raiſe Him again even from diſſected Limbs or from *ſmoking* * Aſhes.—The ſame GOD, who required this Sacrifice, had expreſly declared, *In Iſaac ſhall thy Seed be called.* Therefore the Patriarch aſſured Himſelf, that the Promiſe would, in a Way known to infinite Wiſdom, be moſt punctually accompliſhed.

Hence

Things are ſpoken, to which ſuch admirable Atchievements are aſcribed, throughout this whole Chapter, was a Faith "in the Seed of the Woman," the promiſed MESSIAH.—Or, could it be demonſtrated (which, from Verſe 26 alone, I will venture to pronounce impoſſible) that in all theſe heroic Inſtances of Obedience, there was no believing Regard to *CHRIST*; no Apprehenſion of his unſpeakable Love; no Application of his tranſcendent Merits; our Argument would not loſe its Force, but ſtrike with *redoubled* Energy. For, if a Belief in very *inferior* Manifeſtations of the divine Goodneſs, Faithfulneſs, and Power, wrought ſo efficaciouſly on thoſe antient Worthies; how much more victoriouſly muſt the ſame Principle act, under far *brighter* Diſplays of all the ſupreme Perfections, in the Perſon of *JESUS CHRIST!*—I would only add, that ſo long as this Chapter remains in the Bible, it will furniſh an unanſwerable Confutation of thoſe Objections, which ſuppoſe the Doctrine of Faith to have an unkindly Influence on religious or virtuous Practice. Againſt all ſuch Cavils, *it will ſtand faſt for evermore as the Moon, and as the faithful Witneſs in Heaven.*

* He ſeems to have expected not only the certain, but the *immediate* Reſtoration of his ſlain Son. That he ſhould be revived on the very Spot; before He left the Place; ſo as to accompany his Return. For, he ſays to his Servants, not *I*, but *We* will go, and worſhip, and *return*. נשובה Ver. 5.

Hence he made no Diſpute, and felt no Reluctance. His Faith diſregarded all the Contrariety of Appearances; baniſhed every uneaſy Apprehenſion; and neither Fear, nor Sorrow, had place in his Breaſt. Confident of GOD's Ability, and making no Doubt of his Fidelity, He *readily* and *chearfully** obeyed. You

* This Account, is ſo *very extraordinary*, that I ſhall not be ſurpriſed, if the Reader finds ſome Difficulty in giving his Aſſent to it. Eſpecially, as He may have accuſtomed Himſelf to form very different Conceptions of this remarkable Affair; and may poſſibly be confirmed in a different Train of Ideas, by ſeeing a Repreſentation of the Story in a celebrated *Print*. Where the Father appears, claſping his Son in a tender Embrace; bedewing him with his Tears; and ſuffering as much through Grief, as the devoted Youth is going to ſuffer by the Knife.—But the *Artiſt*, I apprehend, had not ſo attentively examined the Circumſtances of the ſacred Narrative, nor ſo carefully compared them with other Paſſages of Scripture, as a judicious and worthy *Friend* of mine. From whom I learnt to conſider this wonderful Tranſaction in the above-repreſented View. And I muſt confeſs, the more I revolve it in my Mind, the more I am convinced of its Propriety and Truth. That all was tranſacted, not with great Reluctance and extreme Anguiſh; but, as *Chryſoſtom* very ſtrongly ſpeaks, μετα προθυμιας ζεσης και επιτεταμενης σφοδρα, *with Alacrity and Zeal, with intenſe Deſire and complacential Delight.*

I flatter myſelf, the Reader will be of the ſame Opinion, if he pleaſes to conſult the Tenth Chapter of *Leviticus*. Where *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the Sons of *Aaron*, are devoured by Fire from before the LORD. Yet *Aaron* is not allowed to mourn, even at ſuch a terrible and afflictive Viſitation. And when, through the Frailty of human Nature, He could not wholly refrain, He durſt not preſume to eat of the Sin-offering. *Such Things*, ſays He, *have befallen me, if I had eaten of the Sin-offering, ſhould it have been accepted in the Sight of the* LORD?— Let me add, that we find not the leaſt Indication of ſuch

agonizing

You admire, and very juſtly, this heroic Act of Obedience.—A Son, for whom He waited ſo long —received in ſo extraordinary a Manner—upon whom his Heart was ſet—in whom all his Expectations centered—who alone could convey to all Nations the promiſed Bleſſing—to offer *this* Son as a Sacrifice, and that by his *own* Hand—never was ſuch an Inſtance of Obedience performed, attempted, or heard of.—Yet We ſhall both do well to remember, that *Abraham* was not juſtified by this, but by the infinitely more noble Obedience of JESUS CHRIST. His Faith, receiving this, relying on this, rejoicing in this, diſpoſed and enabled Him for ſuch wonderful Self-denial, Fortitude, and Duty.

If all this, which would otherwiſe have been utterly impracticable, was wrought by Faith; You need not ſuſpect, of *Weakneſs* and *Inſufficiency*, ſo approved a Principle. Far, far from enervating, it will invigorate every good Diſpoſition; and inſtead of damping, will give Life to every religious Duty. —Cheriſh Faith, and You will of courſe cultivate Obedience: Water this Root, and the Branches of univerſal Godlineſs will aſſuredly partake the beneficial Effects; will ſpread their Honours, and bring forth their Fruits.—Through the *Power* of Faith, the Saints have wrought Righteouſneſs, in all its magnanimous and exemplary Acts.—The

agonizing Sorrow, nor indeed of *any* Sorrow at all, in the Hiſtory as related by *Moſes*. Neither could *Abraham* have been a proper Type of the eternal FATHER, making his only begotten SON a Sacrifice for Sin, if He had not willingly offered up *Iſaac*. Indeed to offer willingly, ſeems to have been abſolutely *neceſſary*, in every acceptable Oblation, and every religious Service. See 2 *Cor.* ix. 7. 1 *Chron.* xxviii. 9.

Doctrine of Faith is called by St. Paul, *A Doctrine according to Godlineſs* *; exquiſitely contrived to anſwer all the Ends, and ſecure every Intereſt of real Piety.—The *Grace* of Faith St. *Jude* ſtyles, *Our moſt holy Faith* †; intimating, that it is not only productive of Holineſs, but that the moſt *refined* and *exalted* Holineſs ariſes from this Stock; is produced by believing in JESUS.

Let Us then be diligent to exerciſe, and careful to increaſe, Faith in *JESUS CHRIST*. Let Us maintain the ſame zealous Solicitude for this leading capital Grace, as the renowned *Epaminondas* expreſſed for his Shield. When that gallant General was, in an Engagement with the Enemy, ſtruck to the Ground; his Soldiers carried him off, breathleſs and fainting to his Tent. The Moment he opened his Eyes, and recovered the Uſe of Speech, he aſked—not whether, his Wound was Mortal? not whether his Troops were routed?—But whether his *Shield* was ſafe?—May We be enabled, my dear Friend, to keep our Shield ſafe! May We be *ſtrong*, be *ſteady*, be *lively* in Faith! Then, I doubt not, We ſhall give Glory to GOD; receive Comfort to Ourſelves; and abound in the Works of the LORD.

The Apoſtle prays, in behalf of his *Epheſian* Converts, that they may every One enjoy the Privileges of Grace, and each experience the Efficacy of Faith. Or, to uſe his own animated Words, That they *may know, what is the Hope of their Calling in CHRIST JESUS; and what is the exceeding Greatneſs of his Power, to themward who believe* ‡. Than which Prayer, nothing can cloſe either this or the preceding Letter, with more Propriety, or with

* 1 Tim. vi. 3. † Jude 20. ‡ Eph. i. 18.

with greater Dignity. As nothing can more fully expreſs the Sentiments, the Wiſhes, the very Soul of

Your moſt affectionate

ASPASIO.

P.S. I ſaid, "The infinitely more noble Obedience "of *JESUS CHRIST*."—For, to this Obedience I would have our Thoughts continually directed. This ſurpaſſes the Services both of Angels and Men, in all their various and wonderful Orders. 'Tis true, compared with our Duties, *Abraham*'s Obedience is like *Saul*'s Stature; *who, from his Shoulders and upward, was higher than any of the People.* But when the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST* comes into View, it is ſomewhat like that magnificent Perſonage, deſcribed by St. *John*, in the tenth of the *Revelation* *. —Should ſuch a ſublime and majeſtic Being, appear amidſt an Aſſembly, of the moſt renowned Monarchs in the World; how would their Splendour be eclipſed, and all their Grandeur dwindle into Meanneſs! Before ſuch an illuſtrious Potentate of Heaven, who would take Notice of *Cæſar*, or beſtow a Look upon *Alexander?* So, the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, being the Righteouſneſs of HIM, who lay in the Boſom of the FATHER from Eternity; the Righteouſneſs of HIM, who now ſits on the right Hand of the Throne of the Majeſty in the Heavens;

* If the Reader pleaſes, He may ſee this beautiful and grand Piece of Imagery illuſtrated, in *Hervey*'s Meditations, Vol. II. p. 21. Edit. 14.

this Righteouſneſs being, in itſelf moſt conſummately perfect, and unſpeakably ennobled by the Dignity of the Performer; all other Kinds, Degrees, or Forms of Righteouſneſs, ſhrink, before it, into the Littleneſs of Pygmies, of Worms, of Mites. Could they ſpeak, the Language of each would be; "*Look not upon me, for I am* dim, yea, I am "*black.* But look upon your LORD, for "HIS Works are marvelous, and HE is "glorious in his Holineſs."

LETTER XII.

ASPASIO *to* THERON.

IT is very probable, while I am reading yours, You are peruſing mine. But how unlike is my Friend to the Repreſentation he receives! How unlike the ſatisfied, unſuſpecting, chearful *Abraham!* Why this *dejected* Air in your Temper? Why theſe *penſive* Strokes in your Letter *?—Let me anticipate your Reply, and make Anſwer to myſelf.—This Gloom, I truſt, is a Sign of approaching Day. Juſt before the Morning Dawn, the nocturnal Darkneſs is blackeſt. And juſt before the Appearance

* *Theron*'s Letter is ſuppreſſed; becauſe, a great Part of it, or what is much to the ſame Purpoſe, will occur in the following Dialogues. Where He opens his Conſcience, and diſcloſes his Scruples, Fears, and Diſtreſſes.

pearance of the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, the alarmed Sinner's Diſtreſs is frequently the deepeſt. I promiſe myſelf, the Hour is at Hand, which will *put off your Sackcloth, and gird You with Gladneſs.*

Another favourable Preſage is, That You take the direct and certain Way, to obtain ſubſtantial Comfort. The Righteouſneſs of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, after which You inquire, about which You are ſolicitous, is a never-failing Source of Conſolation. Becauſe it acquits from all Sin; ſecures from all Condemnation; and renders the Believer unblameable and unreprovable in the Sight of GOD. Therefore, ſays the HOLY GHOST, *His Name is as Ointment poured forth*:* even that divinely precious Name—by which He has been celebrated in the preceding Epiſtles; by which he is diſtinguiſhed in the Scriptures of Truth; by which, I hope, He will be more and more revealed in my *Theron's* Mind—THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. The Diſcovery of Him under this moſt amiable and glorious Capacity, will indeed be like breaking open a Vial of the richeſt Unguents. Which not only fill the Room, and regale the Senſe, with their delightful Fragrance; but refreſh the Spirits, and *rejoice the very Heart.*—Might my Writing, or my Diſcourſe, be as the *Alabaſter-box* to contain, to convey, and preſent theſe reviving Odours; how highly ſhould I think myſelf honoured, and how ſignally my Endeavours bleſſed!

You aſk, "How this Righteouſneſs of the Divine "REDEEMER becomes ours?"—It is a Queſ-

* Cant. i. 3.

tion, which I receive with the utmoſt Pleaſure; and, with equal Pleaſure, ſhall attempt an Anſwer. Or rather, as the SPIRIT of our GOD prompted the firſt, may the ſame unerring GUIDE ſuggeſt the laſt!—This He has abundantly done by his Prophets and Apoſtles. So that I need only have recourſe to their Writings, and collect ſome of the Hints, which lie treaſured up in thoſe Storehouſes of Wiſdom.

There We are often told of Union with *CHRIST*. Believers are ſaid to be *in CHRIST* *, and to be *one with CHRIST* †.—What is ſtill higher, and implies a greater Degree of Nearneſs, They are *Members of his Body, of his Fleſh, and of his Bones* ‡.—And, which denotes the moſt intimate Connection imaginable, *They that are joined to the LORD JESUS, are one Spirit* ‖ with Him!—As theſe Expreſſions appear dark, and their Senſe lies deep, it has pleaſed our all-condeſcending INSTUCTOR to illuſtrate them, by a Variety of ſignificant Types, and lively Similitudes. This Remark very opportunely reminds me of an Engagement, which, ſome Time ago, I undertook to execute, but have hitherto omitted—To make it evident, that the bleſſed Doctrine, for which We have been pleading, *is deducible from ſeveral Scripture Images* §. A ſhort Deſcant upon ſome of the principal, will, I hope, at once diſchage my former Obligation, and ſatisfy your preſent Inquiry.

This was ſhadowed forth by the coſtly, odoriferous, flowing Unguent, poured upon *Aaron*'s Head; *which*

* Col. i. 2. † Heb. ii. 11. ‡ Eph. v. 30.
‖ 1 Cor. vi. 17. § *See* Vol. II. p. 353.

*which ran down upon his Beard, and deſcended to the Skirts * of his Clothing.* So the Merits of our great HIGH-PRIEST are derived down to all the Faithful; even thoſe of the meaneſt Station in Life, and the loweſt Attainments in Religion.

Was it not typefied by that inſtructive Viſion, which the Prophet *Zechariah* ſaw? *I have looked, and behold! A Candleſtick all of Gold, with a Bowl upon the Top of it, and his ſeven Lamps thereon, and ſeven Pipes to the ſeven Lamps, which were upon the Top thereof: And two Olive-trees by it, one upon the right Side of the Bowl, and the other upon the left Side thereof; which, through two golden Pipes, empty the golden Oil out of themſelves* †. The *Bowl* and the *Lamps* were a proper Emblem of Believers: who are, by Nature, dry Veſſels, and deſtitute of all Good; yet ſhould ſhine as Lights, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe Generation.—The *Olive-trees*, arrayed in Verdure, and abounding with Sap; always emptying themſelves, yet ever full; are a very juſt Repreſentation of *CHRIST*, of his unchangeable Love, and his inexhauſtible Grace.—The *golden Pipes*, through which the Olive-branches tranſmit their Oil, ſeem to be figurative of Faith, in its

 various

* Pſal. cxxxiii. 2. What We render *Skirts*, is, in the Original, not בגדו, but פי מדותיו, *The Mouth*, or, as the the Word is tranſlated (*Job* xxx. 18.) *The Collar* of his Garments. It is hardly ſuppoſable, that the conſecrating Oil flowed down to the very Bottom of the ſacerdotal Veſtments. But We may eaſily imagine it reaching the upper Hem, or the Opening round the Neck; what the *Greeks* call περιδραχηλιον—This Senſe will ſufficiently preſerve the Gradation; The *Head*; the *Beard*; the *Clothes*. Which ſeem to denote *CHRIST*, his more advanced Saints, and Believers of a lower Claſs.

† Zech. iv. 2, 3, 12.

various and repeated Actings. By these Channels of Conveyance, the unspeakable Benefits of a REDEEMER are communicated to our Souls, and repleniſh thoſe empty Baſons.

Another Type the Apoſtle mentions. *The firſt Adam*, He ſays, *was a Figure of Him that was to come* *. So eminent a Figure, and correſponding in ſo many Inſtances, that He ſtyles our *LORD JESUS the laſt Adam* †. And why? Becauſe, like the firſt, He was a *Covenant-head* to his People, and tranſacted in their Stead. Were we made Sinners in *Adam?* We are made righteous in *CHIRST.* Is *Adam*'s Sin imputed to all his natural Offspring? So is *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs to all his ſpiritual Seed.—The Conſequences of both, render the Doctrine more intelligible, and the Truth more undeniable. All Men are *judged, condemned, dead* ‡; doomed inevitably to the Death of the Body, and juſtly liable to the Death of the Soul, on the Score of *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion. All Believers are *acquitted, juſtified, ſaved* ‖; ſaved from the firſt Death, and made Heirs of the Reſurrection; ſaved from the ſecond Death, and intitled to Life eternal; by virtue of *CHRIST*'s Obedience.

This Union with *CHRIST*, was not only prefigured by Types, but diſplayed by a Variety of Similitudes, taken from the moſt familiar Occurrences of Life. By which it appears to be our Divine MASTER's Will, that We ſhould live under the *habitual Belief* of this momentous Truth, and in the *conſtant Enjoyment* of this diſtinguiſhed Privilege,—You cannot viſit a Friend, or view your Children;

* Rom. v. 14. † 1 Cor. xv. 45. ‡ Rom. v. 15, 16. ‖ Rom. v. 19, 21.

Children; You cannot enter your Garden, diſcourſe with your Spouſe, or contemplate your own Body, without a Repreſentation and a Remembrancer of this precious Bleſſing.

CHRIST ſays to his Diſciples, *Henceforth I call You not Servants but Friends* *. Friends are a ſecond Self †. St. *Paul*, ſpeaking of *Oneſimus*, uſes this remarkable Phraſe, *Receive Him, as Myſelf*; and, which is ſtill more emphatical, *Receive Him, that is mine own Bowels* ‡. Is not *CHRIST*'s Friendſhip of the moſt tender and exalted Kind? Is it not equal, is it not ſuperior, infinitely ſuperior to that of *Paul* for *Oneſimus*, or that of *Jonathan* for *David*?—*Jonathan* loved *David* as his own Soul. But *CHRIST* loved Sinners with a Love ſtronger than Death. They were dearer to Him than his own ineſtimable Life.—*Jonathan* expoſed himſelf to imminent Danger, in vindicating *David*'s Conduct. *JESUS* ſurrendered himſelf to certain Death, in making Reconciliation for our Offences.—*Jonathan* interceded once and again with his Father in *David*'s Behalf. *CHRIST* ever liveth, to plead his Blood, and make Interceſſion for Tranſgreſſors.—*Jonathan ſtripped Himſelf of the Robe that was upon Him, and gave it to David, and his Garment, even to his Sword, and his Bow, and his Girdle* ‖. Our REDEEMER, without ſtripping Himſelf, has cloathed Us (ſuch is the Prerogative of a Divine Perſon!) with the Robe of his Righteouſneſs, and with the Garment of his Salvation. He has conſigned over to Us all the Merit of his holy Life and propitiatory Death.

CHRIST

* John xv. 15.

† *Horace* calls his Friend *Virgil*, *Animæ Dimidium meæ*.

‡ *Philem.* 12, 17. ‖ 1 Sam. xviii. 4.

CHRIST ſtands related to his People, not as a Friend only, but as a *Parent*. He is called by a Prophet, THE EVERLASTING FATHER *; and we are ſaid, by an Apoſtle, to be *his Children* †.—Children look upon themſelves, as intereſted in the Wealth of their Parents. They expect, and not without reaſonable Ground, to reap Benefit from it, while the Parents live; and to become Poſſeſſors of it, when they die. Accordingly the Father ſays in the Goſpel; *Son, all that I have is thine* ‡—Since the high and holy IMMANUEL vouchſafes to be our FATHER, can we ſuppoſe Him leſs generous than an earthly Parent? Or can We imagine that *his* Children ſhall have leſs to hope, than the Heirs of an earthly Progenitor? May We not, ought We not to regard all his communicable Goods, all the Benefits reſulting from his meritorious Sufferings and perfect Obedience, as our Portion?—Eſpecially, ſince He is the *Teſtator* ‖ alſo; has bequeathed them to Us by Will; and, having ſubmitted to Death, they become legally ours.

I am the VINE, ſays our LORD, *Ye are the Branches* §. They who believe, are ingrafted into *CHRIST*.—Take notice of a Cyon. What are the Conſequences of its *Ingrafture?* It is embodied with the Subſtance of the Tree, and partakes of its Fatneſs. The Sap, imbibed by the Root, circulates into it; gives it vegetable Life; fills it with Buds, decks it with Bloſſoms, and loads it with Fruit.—If then we are one with *CHRIST*, as much as the Branch is one with the Stock, it ſhould ſeem probable, even upon the Principles of common Experience, that his *Wiſdom* is ours, to enlighten

* Iſai. vi. 9. † Heb. ii 13. ‡ Luke xv. 31.
‖ Heb. ix. 17. § John xv. 5.

lighten Us; his *Righteouſneſs* is ours, to juſtify Us; his *Spirit* is ours, to ſanctify Us; his *Redemption* is ours, to make Us completely and eternally happy. —What ſeems probable from the Nature of Things, is rendered certain by the Word of Revelation. For thus ſaith our unerring Teacher; *Of Him are Ye in CHRIST JESUS; Who of GOD is made unto Us Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption. In CHRIST JESUS*; here the *Union* is expreſſed. Then follows, and from thence flows, a *Communion* with Him in all his mediatorial Bleſſings.

CHRIST is united to his People by a Tie, cloſer and dearer than the parental. They are not only his Children, but his *Spouſe*. He is often called their Bridegroom, and is not aſhamed to avow the tender Engagement; *I will betroth Thee to Me for ever. Yea, I will betroth Thee unto me in Righteouſneſs, and in Judgment, and in Loving-kindneſs, and in Mercies. I will even betroth Thee unto Me in Faithfulneſs* *. The condeſcending GOD multiplies, diverſifies, accumulates his Words. And this, with admirable Propriety, as well as ſurpaſſing Goodneſs. The Honour is ſo *high*, and the Favour ſo *great*, We ſhould hardly know how to believe it, and hardly venture to apply it. Leſt therefore by a ſingle Expreſſion, it ſhould not be ſufficiently eſtabliſhed, it ſtands ratified by repeated Aſſeverations, and with all the Energy of Language. So that, be the Grace ever ſo aſtoniſhing, We are aſſured, the Fact is equally certain; He that is *our* MAKER, is alſo *our* HUSBAND †. Let

* Hoſ. ii. 19, 20.

† Iſai. liv. 5. *Thy MAKER is thy Huſband; the LORD of Hoſts is his Name; thy REDEEMER, the Holy One of Iſrael; the GOD of the whole Earth ſhall He*

Let Us conſider what follows, upon ſuch an Union. We may take for an Example, the Caſe of *Boaz*

He be called. Wonderfully emphatical, and unſpeakably precious Words!—*Thy MAKER is thy Huſband.* Leſt any, amazed at this Condeſcenſion and Grace, ſhould ſtagger through Unbelief, and attempt to qualify the Expreſſion; leſt a Suſpicion ſhould ariſe, that the Expreſſion, thus connected, can never mean the ſelf-exiſtent, the eternal, infinite GOD; the Prophet explains Himſelf. *The LORD of Hoſts is his Name.* He is no inferior or ſubordinate Perſon. He is none other than the ſupreme omnipotent JEHOVAH; who does according to his Will, among the Armies of the Sky, and the Reptiles of the Ground.—As this is a Doctrine of the laſt Importance, the ſacred Writer pours greater Light upon it, and aſcertains it with greater Preciſion. *The Holy One of Iſrael* is his Name; poſſeſſed of all Holineſs, Perfection, and Glory; whom the Church in all Ages and Places, acknowledge as the one adorable Object of their Worſhip, their Hope, their Faith.—To eſtabliſh, beyond all Contradiction, this moſt joyous and raviſhing Truth, it is farther declared; *The GOD*, not of *Iſrael* only, but *of the whole Earth*, and of all the Nations, *ſhall He be called.* Yes; HE, who is the Huſband of his People, and loves them with the Complacency of a Bridegroom; HE now is, and ſooner or later ſhall be recognized, as the ſole Proprietor of the Univerſe. As the Creator, Governor, and GOD, of all Men, Creatures, and Things.

Let the Reader, at his Leiſure, compare the foregoing Text with thoſe Paſſages in the New Teſtament, which repreſent *CHRIST*, as the Bridegroom and Huſband of his Church. The Compariſon will yield a moſt delightful and inconteſtable Proof, that our SAVIOUR is the *LORD of Hoſts*, the *Holy One of Iſrael*, *the GOD of the whole Earth*. A Truth, which ſhould never depart from our Minds; which ſhould be interwoven with all our Meditations on *CHRIST*. Since it gives much the ſame Addition of Beauty, Dignity, and Glory, to the Privileges of the Goſpel and the whole Plan of Redemption; which the Light of the Sun gives to the Flowers of the Garden, the Proſpects of the Field, and the whole Face of Nature. See *John* iii. 29. *Rev.* xxi. 9. 2 *Cor.* xi. 2.

Boaz and *Ruth*. Soon as their Nuptials were ſolemnized, ſhe that was poor, became rich: from a Gleaner in the Field, ſhe commenced *Miſtreſs* of the Harveſt: and, from abiding by the Maidens, had a Seat at the Maſter's Table.—If we are united to *CHRIST* by a Marriage Contract, the ſame Effects take place. We that were poor, are rich in Him. We, who had Nothing, poſſeſs all Things in *CHRIST*. We that dwell in Duſt, are made *to ſit together* with our exalted HUSBAND in heavenly Places *.

If you chooſe ſome modern Exemplification, what can be more pertinent, than the remarkable Inſtance of your Neighbour *Arietta*? She was lately left a Widow, by the diſſolute and extravagant *Bellario*. Her Circumſtances miſerably embarraſſed, and the Eſtate deeply mortgaged. Her Friends looked ſhy, and her Creditors became clamorous. Scarce a Day paſſed, but it made ſome new Diſcovery of Debts contracted by the Deceaſed. So that the Affairs of the Survivor appeared with a more melancholy Aſpect, and in a leſs retrievable Condition. But, having won, firſt the Compaſſion, then the Affection, of the wealthy and illuſtrious *Philander*; how happily is the Face of Things altered! All her *Debts* devolve upon Him, and all his *Dignity* is derived to Her †. He ſtands reſponſible, for whatever

* Eph. ii. 6.

† *Ubi Tu Caius, ibi Ego Caia* was the *Roman* Maxim. Agreeably to this Rule, which has obtained among all civilized Nations, the Scripture calls *the Church* by the Name of her *Huſband*; and the divine Huſband by the Name of the Church. To denote that interchangeable Relation, and Communion of Intereſts, which reſult from ſuch a conjugal State. Compare *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. with *Iſai.* xlix. 3. and *Jer.* xxxiii. 15, 16.

ever She *owes*; and She is a Sharer, in whatever He *poſſeſſes*. Though ruined by her late Huſband, She is more than reſtored by her preſent; has Reaſon to rejoice in his Affluence, and to glory in his Honours.—Have not We alſo Reaſon to rejoice in our heavenly BRIDEGROOM? Since a far more glorious Exchange ſubſiſts between Him and his myſtical Spouſe. He has bore the *Curſe*, that We may inherit the *Bleſſing*. *Sin* was charged on Him, that *Righteouſneſs* might be imputed to Us. In a Word, He has ſuſtained our deplorable Miſeries, that He might impart to Us his unſearchable Treaſures.—Does the Law demand *perfect* Purity of Nature, and *perfect* Obedience of Life? It muſt go to Him for Satisfaction. Do We want Grace, and Glory, and every good Thing? We may look to Him for a Supply. To HIM, *Theron*, *in whom it has pleaſed the FATHER, that all Fulneſs ſhould dwell* *.

If any Thing can expreſs an Union, more intimate and inſeparable than the conjugal, it is that of the Members with the *Head*. This Image is uſed by the HOLY GHOST, to ſhadow forth the Connection between *CHRIST* and the Faithful. He is the *Head over all Things*, with reſpect to Rule and Supremacy; but a Head of Life, and Influence, with reſpect *to the Church* †.—The Head and the Members conſtitute one natural Body; *CHRIST* and his Church compoſe one myſtical Body. What Kindneſs is done, what Injury is offered to the Members, the Head regards them as done to itſelf. Accordingly *CHRIST* ſays to the outrageous *Saul*, who made Havock of the Church; *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt Thou ME* ‡? He declares concerning thoſe

* Col. i. 19. † Eph. i. 22. ‡ Acts ix. 4.

thoſe indigent *Chriſtians* to whoſe Neceſſities We adminiſter Relief; *Inaſmuch as Ye have done it unto them, Ye have done it unto ME**.—The Animal Spirits formed in the Head, are formed for the Benefit of the whole Body, and deſigned for the Uſe of all the Members. So the Righteouſneſs wrought by *JESUS CHRIST*, is wrought out for his whole myſtical Body, and intended for the Advantage of all his People; to be the conſtituent Cauſe of their Juſtification, and the meritorious Cauſe of their Salvation.

Being then ſo nearly related, ſo cloſely united to the bleſſed *JESUS*, it is no wonder, that Believers are now loved with the ſame fatherly Love, and will hereafter be Partakers of the ſame heavenly Glory †.—What might we not expect from the ever faithful REDEEMER, if He vouchſafed to acknowledge but *one* of theſe endearing Names? Since He has engaged Himſelf to Us by *all* the Ties of Affinity and Affection; may we not promiſe Ourſelves, and with the Aſſurance of Hope, every good Thing; *Even all the Fulneſs of GOD* ‡ our Saviour?—Does not each of theſe tender Relations, ſubſiſting between *CHRIST* and his Saints, imply an intire Property in one another, and a mutual Participation of all that belongs to either? If this is included in each ſeparately, how much more in all conjointly? *My Beloved is mine, and I am his.* I dare not ſay, this is the Poſey of the myſtical Ring. Leſt the Thought ſhould appear quaint, and below the Dignity of the Subject. But this expreſſes the Effect, the undoubted Effect of ſo enriching, ſo ennobling, ſo divine an Union.

How

* Matt. xxv. 40. † John xvii. 22, 23. ‡ Eph. iii. 19.

How pleaſing, yet how amazing the Thought! Shall We, who ſay to Corruption, *Thou art my Father*; and to the Worm, *Thou art my Mother and my Siſter* *: ſhall *We* be permitted to ſay, concerning the HEAD of all Principality and Power, *We are Members of his Body, of his Fleſh, and of his Bones* †? —What a Mercy might We eſteem it, not to be confounded before a MAJESTY ſo ſublime and magnificent! What a Favour to obtain the leaſt propitious Regard from the KING immortal and inviſible! What an Honour, to be admitted into his Family, and numbered among the Meaneſt of his Servants!—But to be his *adopted* Children; to be his *eſpouſed* Bride; to be the Members of his ſacred Body—To have HIM for our everlaſting *Father*, HIM for the *Bridegroom* of our Souls, HIM for our heavenly *Head*; who is the MAKER of all Worlds, and the SOVEREIGN of all Creatures! What Words can duly celebrate, what Heart can ſufficiently admire, the Condeſcenſion and the Love of our adorable *JESUS*? Or who can juſtly queſtion the Fruits of ſuch a Fellowſhip, and the Conſequences of ſuch an Union? Queſtion them! No, the Fruits are infallibly ſure, as the Privilege is inexpreſſibly great.

Let me once again introduce Dr. *Lightfoot*, as a great and venerable Witneſs of both theſe Truths. "*Laban* ſpeak high, when He ſaid; *Theſe Children* "*are mine, and all theſe Things thou ſeeſt are mine.* "But how high and glorious is that, which may "be ſaid of a juſtified Perſon! All thou heareſt of "*CHRIST* is thine; his Life is thine, his Death "is thine, his Obedience, Merit, Spirit, all thine ‡."

—To

* Job xvii. 14. † Eph. v. 30.

‡ See *Dr.* LIGHTFOOT's *Works*, Vol. II. p. 1077.

—To this let me join another Witneſs, whoſe Teſtimony, though more plain, is no leſs weighty. "Faith, ſays *Luther*, muſt be purely taught: name-"ly, that Thou art ſo entirely and nearly joined "to *CHRIST*, that He and Thou are made as it "were one Perſon: ſo that thou mayeſt boldly ſay, "I am now one with *CHRIST*; that is to ſay, "*CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs, Victory, and Life "are mine. And again, *CHRIST* may ſay, I "am that Sinner, that is, his Sins and his Death "are mine, becauſe He is united and joined un-"to Me and I unto Him *."—Rich and important Words! Than which nothing can give Us a juſter or fuller Explanation of the Apoſtle's Aſſertion, *We are Partakers of CHRIST* †.

When ſome foreign Ladies, of the firſt Quality, paid a Viſit to *Leonidas*'s Queen; the Talk turned upon their rich Clothes, their coſtly Jewels, and ſplendid Equipage. After they had ſeverally diſplayed their own Grandeur, they inquired after her Majeſty's Finery. What *She* had to diſtinguiſh Her from the Vulgar?—She replied, *My illuſtrious Huſband* ‡.—What elſe? *My illuſtrious Huſband.*—And as often as They repeated the ſame Queſtion, She returned the ſame Anſwer.—Could this Queen ſpeak of her royal Conſort, in ſuch admiring, rejoicing, ſelf-gratulating Terms? And ſhall not vile Sinners look upon their REDEEMER—that moſt majeſtic, yet all-condeſcending Bride-

* LUTHER upon *Galat.* † Heb. iii. 14.

‡ The amiable and heroic *Panthea* expreſſes Herſelf in much the ſame Manner, concerning her gallant Huſband *Abradates*; Συ γαρ εμοιγε μεγιστος κοσμος εση. XENOPH. Cyropæd. Lib. VI.

groom; who is full of Grace and Truth, full of Merit and Righteouſneſs—ſhall not they *much more* look upon HIM, as their Honour and their Joy; the Object of their Dependence, and the Cauſe of their Boaſting?

You once mentioned *Self-importance*. I hope, We have now renounced that ſpecious Abſurdity. Have abjured that Idol of Jealouſy. It is as much a Deluſion, as it is a Provocation. Nothing can give Us any Importance, but the Work and Worthineſs of *CHRIST*.—Without theſe, We are deſpicable and abominable. Our Performances are Vanity; our Perſons are Pollution; and both deſerve to be treated, like that infamous King of *Iſrael*, to whom the Prophet *Eliſha* declared; *As the LORD GOD of Hoſts liveth, before whom I ſtand, ſurely, were it not that I regard the Preſence of* Jehoſhaphat *King of* Judah, *I would not look toward thee, nor ſee thee* *.—But the Work and Worthineſs of *CHRIST*, give Us Acceptance with GOD, and Dignity before his Angels. Theſe will afford Us Conſolation on Earth, and procure for Us Eſtimation in Heaven. Through theſe, We may lift up our Heads with Courage, at the Judgment-Seat; and may make our Appearance with Honour, amidſt the Inhabitants of Glory.—Let Us then exult, let Us triumph, in our heavenly Bridegroom. *Forſaking all other* Cauſes of Confidence, let Us *keep* our Hearts, our Affections, our Thoughts, *only to HIM*.

I ſhould find it difficult, to refrain from the farther Proſecution of ſo engaging a Topic, did I not purpoſe to wait upon my *Theron* very ſpeedily. Then I ſhall

* 2 Kings iii. 14.

I ſhall have an Opportunity of pouring into his Boſom all the Fulneſs of my Heart, with regard to this delightful Subject.—In the mean time, let me exhort my dear Friend, to be of good Comfort. *Heavineſs may endure for a Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning* *. This Sorrow of which you complain, may be the Fore-runner of ſpiritual and eternal Conſolation.

While I am writing, there appears full in my View, one of the fineſt *Rainbows*, I ever beheld. *It compaſſeth the Heaven with a glorious Circle*; ſo glorious, that it is no Diſparagement of the Almighty CREATOR, to ſay, *the Hands of the MOST HIGH have bended it* †—On what Foundation, would I aſk, is that ſtately and beautiful Arch raiſed? From what Source, do all its radiant and lovely Colours ſpring? It is raiſed on a *gloomy* Aſſemblage of Vapours; and all its rich Tinctures ſpring from a *louring* Cloud.—Thus does the bleſſed GOD, on a Conviction of Guilt and a Senſe of Ruin, ſpread Faith, imprint Holineſs, and diffuſe Gladneſs. May all theſe, ere long, ariſe in my *Theron*'s Breaſt! And each be—*bright*, as that reſplendent Bow—*laſting*, as the Sun that creates it!

Yes; it is the ardent Wiſh of my Soul, and ſhall be my frequent Prayer to GOD, *That both our Hearts may be comforted, being knit together in Love, unto all Riches of the full Aſſurance of Underſtanding* ‡, in this great Myſtery of Godlineſs.—What Vigour of Expreſſion, what Exuberance of Ideas, and, above all, what diſtinguiſhed Privileges are Here!—*Aſſurance*—*Full* Aſſurance—*Riches*

* Pſal. xxx. 5. † Eccluſ. xliii. 12. ‡ Col. ii. 2.

of the full Aſſurance—*All* Riches of the full Aſſurance of Underſtanding—in reference to our Union with *CHRIST*, and its unutterably precious Effects!—Can the Orator expreſs more? Can the Sinner deſire more? Can the Saint, I had almoſt ſaid, can the Archangel enjoy more?—May this be the Portion of my dear *Theron*, and of

His ever faithful

ASPASIO.

DIALOGUE XV.

ASPASIO had taken Leave of his Friend *Camillus*, and was come to reviſit *Theron*. Whoſe Thoughts ſeemed to be in a State of much Fluctuation, and no ſmall Anxiety. Hoping, that ſome proper Converſation on the *Grace* and *Privileges* of the Goſpel, might compoſe and comfort his Mind. Might, while his Heart was ſoftened by humbling Convictions, fix the Stamp of genuine Chriſtianity; and deliver his whole Soul into the Mould * of evangelical Religion.

When Sorrow wounds the Breaſt, as Ploughs the Glebe,
And Hearts obdurate feel her ſoft'ning Show'r,
Her Seed celeſtial then *glad Wiſdom ſows:*
Her golden Harveſts triumph in the Soil †.

* *Deliver into the Mould*—This is the literal Tranſlation, and exact Senſe of St. *Paul*'s Phraſe; Εις ον παρεδοθητε τυπον διδαχης. Rom. vi. 17.—Which, as it contains a *beautiful Alluſion*, conveys alſo a very *inſtructive Admonition*. Intimating, that our Minds, all pliant and ductile, ſhould be conformed to the Precepts of the Goſpel, as liquid Metals take the Figure of ſome elegant Mould, into which they are caſt.

† Night-Thoughts.

He arrived pretty late in the Evening: and, being ſomewhat weary with the Journey, ſoon withdrew to his Repoſe.—The next Morning, as *Theron* walked abroad, to taſte the cool Delights of the Dawn; He was agreeably ſurpriſed, by meeting *Aſpaſio*.

Ther. So ſoon awake, my worthy Friend! And after ſo much Fatigue on the preceding Day!—I had not the leaſt Expectation of your Company, till Breakfaſt. Then indeed I promiſed myſelf a double Regale—The Refreſhments exhibited on the Table; and thoſe *wholeſome Words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST* *, which, more precious than Manna, drop—

Aſp. How, *Theron!*—Have you alſo learnt thoſe ſoothing Arts, which poliſh the Speech, to deprave our Sentiments? Could I have ſuſpected the inchanting Wiles of *Flattery*, from my ſincere, my tried, my boſom Friend?

Ther. Your Friend is ſtill ſincere; and his Words are very remote from Flattery.—How welcome to the wind-bound *Mariner*, weary with Expectation, and ſick with Diſappointments, is the Viſit of a propitious Gale! How welcome to the *Fields*, parched with Drought, and gaſping for Moiſture, are copious Showers of Rain! How acceptable to the *Iſraelites*, traveling through the inhoſpitable Deſart, and pining for want of the Fruits of the Earth, was the miraculous Supply of heavenly Bread!—Yet, neither propitious Gales to the wind-bound Mariner, nor copious Showers to the thirſty Soil, nor heavenly Bread to the famiſhed *Iſraelites*, could be more welcome to each reſpectively, or to all

* 1 Tim. vi. 3.

all jointly, than your late Converſation, and later Correſpondence, to my anxious Soul.

Aſp. Why, I thought, you looked upon *my* Notions as chimerical! Is *Theron* alſo become credulous? Like one of Us weak-headed Believers?—Has *He* quitted the Strong-holds of Reaſon? Is *He* vanquiſhed by the Sling-ſtone of Faith? Or can *He* ſubmit to this ſtrange Method of Salvation, by embracing the Righteouſneſs, and relying on the Obedience of Another?

Ther. I find, my Reaſon was a feeble Guide; or I myſelf not faithful to its genuine Dictates. I was blinded with Prejudice. I was intoxicated with Pride. A vain Conceit of my moral Powers, betrayed me, as I fear it has betrayed many, into a Contempt of the evangelical Righteouſneſs.—I held, what I thought an Honour to human Nature. I now retract my Opinion. I now perceive, that as my *natural Light* could not diſcover the Way, neither can my *perſonal Obedience* put me in Poſſeſſion, of Life and Salvation. No more Banter, *Aſpaſio*:—Have done:—I am ſerious, and very much in earneſt. So much in earneſt, that if all my Acquaintance of the *Phariſaical* Turn, or if all my Brothers of the Smile, ſhould rally me on the Subject; I would frankly acknowledge my Error, and as freely ſign my Recantation.

Aſp. My dear *Theron*, I applaud your Reſolution. You have no more Cauſe to be aſhamed of ſuch a Practice, than *Philip* had to be aſhamed of the Imperfection in his Limbs. When, being obſerved to go lame, with a Wound received in Battle, he had this Conſolation ſuggeſted by one of his Courtiers: "Never bluſh, my royal Sir, for a Defect, which

" puts You in mind of your *Valour*, every Step You " take."—To ſacrifice our Prejudices in the Search of Truth, is no leſs honourable, than to be marked with a Scar, in the Defence of our Country. And never ſurely was any Prejudice greater than *that*, which pretends, by perſonal Virtue and Morality, to ſuperſede the Neceſſity of imputed Righteouſneſs.

I beg Pardon for my Pleaſantry. Since you are ſo very ſerious, a gay Air was quite unſeaſonable.—You cannot often complain, that I am guilty of this Fault. Nor can you eaſily imagine, the Satisfaction I ſhall enjoy; if, either my Letters, or my Diſcourſe, have adminiſtered *any Advantage* to my Friend. I ſhall note it down, among the diſtinguiſhed Bleſſings of my Life; and have an additional Obligation, to love the beneficent AUTHOR of all Good.

But, as I cannot be a Furtherer of your Happineſs, without the greateſt Delight; ſo I cannot be a Witneſs of your Solicitude, without a painful Regret. You muſt therefore permit me to aſk the Cauſe of that unuſual *Vehemence*, which I obſerve in your Speech; and that deep *Concern*, which I read in your Countenance.

Ther. I have been conſidering very attentively, What is the *preſent* State, and what is likely to be the *final* Condition of my Soul.

——————My Hopes and Fears
Start up alarm'd; and o'er Life's narrow Verge
Look down—on what? A fathomleſs Abyſs,
A vaſt Eternity!

My *Sins*, at the ſame time, like an armed Hoſt, are ſet in dreadful Array, and ſurround me on every Side.—*Juſtice*, like an injured and incenſed Foe, unſheaths

unſheaths the Sword, and makes a loud Demand for Vengeance.—No Righteouſneſs of *my own* preſents itſelf, no Righteouſneſs from the Works of the Law, to which I may fly for Refuge.—The Method of Salvation, in which I formerly confided, is a Bridge *broken down*; and leaves me, without affording any Poſſibility of Eſcape, abandoned to the approaching Enemy.

To a Perſon in ſuch deplorable Circumſtances, how reviving, how delightful, is the very Thought of being intereſted in the great REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs!—I don't wonder now at a Saying of *Luther*'s; which I have ſometimes exploded, as ſtrangely extravagant: "That, upon the Diſcovery "of this glorious Righteouſneſs, the Gates of Paradiſe ſeemed to fly open before Him, and the "Dawn of Heaven was all in view."

Talking in this manner, they came to an elevated *Terrace*. Which, about an Hour before, had been ſhaved by the Scythe, and emitted all the Freſhneſs of new-mown Herbage.—On one Side, a fine *Champaign Country* ſtretched its wide Dimenſions.—On the other, a *Flower-Garden* exhibited the laſt Ornaments of the Year.—Here you might ſtill ſee the tufted Vermilion, and the full-blown Ivory, glittering through Spangles of liquid Cryſtal.—There, You might trace the Footſteps of the early Cattle, by many a recent Print on the dewy Lawn.—On the Walls and Eſpaliers, Autumn had ſpread her Stores; and was beginning to beautify their Rinds with many a *ruddy Streak*, or to breathe over their gloſſy Skins her delicate and *inimitable Bloom*.

Aſp.

Asp. See, said *Aspasio*, the Wisdom and Benignity, which, in amiable and inseparable Conjunction, display themselves through the whole Oeconomy of the Universe! *GOD has made every Thing beautiful in his Time* *; every Thing serviceable in its Place. A little while ago, the flowery Meads delighted our Eyes, and the melodious Birds charmed our Ears. Now, the tasteful Fruits are preparing their Dainties; and presenting Us with a Collation, to regale our Palate.—The whole Earth, and all the Seasons, are rich with our CREATOR's Goodness. Yea, the whole Earth, and all that replenishes it, all that surrounds it, are full of his Presence. HE it is, who

Warms in the Sun, refreshes in the Breeze,
Glows in the Stars, and blossoms in the Trees;
Lives through all Life, extends through all Extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent †.

An habitual Belief of this Truth, gives Nature her *loveliest* Aspect, and lends her the most consummate Power to please. The Breath of Violets, and the Blush of Roses; the Music of the Woods, and the Meanders of the Stream; the aspiring Hill; the extended Plain, and all the Decorations of the Landschape; *then* appear in their highest Attractives; *then* touch the Soul with the most refined Satisfaction; when GOD is seen—when GOD is heard—and GOD enjoyed in all. — — — — — — — — — — Is *Theron* lost in Thought, and deprived of Speech? Is He alone silent, while all Things speak their MAKER's Praise?—Does Faith in the Righteousness of *CHRIST* throw a Shade over the Works of Creation? Does it not heighten

* Eccles. iii. 11. † POPE's *Eth. Epist.*

heighten their Beauties, and inliven their Graces? —It does; and to ſuch a Degrée, that the *religious* is the only *true* Philoſopher; nor can the Pleaſures of Imagination ever acquire their proper Reliſh, till they are ripened by the Exerciſe of Devotion.—With this View then, ſince my Friend forbears, let *me* attempt to ſpeak: not to increaſe his Knowledge, but to beget Faith, and cultivate Devotion in Us both.

The ſpacious Canopy * over our Heads, is painted with Blue; and the ample Carpet under our Feet, is tinged with Green. Theſe Colours, by their *ſoft* and *chearing* Qualities, yield a perpetual Refreſhment to the Eye †. Whereas, had the Face of Nature gliſtered with White, or glowed with Scarlet; ſuch ardent and dazling Hues would, inſtead of exhilarating, have fatigued the Sight.—Beſides; as the ſeveral brighter Colours are interſperſed, and form the *Pictures* in this magnificent Piece; the Green and Blue conſtitute an admirable

* What *Aſpaſio* calls the Canopy, *Iſaiah* deſcribes by כדק Which We tranſlate *as a Curtain*; but the exact Signification is, *Sicut tenue, vel tenuiſſimum quid*; Like ſome finely attenuated Expanſe. Not like the Curtains or the Covering of the Tabernacle, which were Goats Hair and Badgers Skins, ſhaggy and coarſe. But like ſome *very fine* Membrane, ſmooth and elegant, nicely poliſhed and inimitably delicate. Than which Compariſon nothing can more perfectly correſpond with the Aſpect of the Sky. *Iſai.* xl. 22.

† ——————————*Gay* Green,
Thou ſmiling Nature's univerſal Robe!
United Light and Shade! Where the Sight dwells,
With growing Strength, and ever-new Delight.
THOMSON's *Spring.*

ble *Ground*, which ſhews them all to the utmoſt Advantage *. To render this fine Ground ſtill more agreeable, it is diverſified, the Green eſpecially, by a Multitude of intermediate Kinds. From the deepeſt Verdure, which borders upon Black, even to the paleſt, which makes a near Approach to Grey.

Had the *Air* been more humid and conſiderably *thicker*, it would have dimmed the Rays of the Sun, and darkened the chearful Day. The Lungs of all terreſtrial Animals, had been clogged in their vital Functions. Men had been ſuffocated, without the ſtrangling Nooſe; or drowned, without the over-whelming Flood.—Was it ſeveral Degrees more *thin* and ſubtilized, Birds would not be able to wing their Way through the Firmament; nor could the Clouds be ſuſtained, in ſo attenuated an Atmoſphere. It would want that balmy Softneſs, which continually feeds the Lamp of Life. It would even elude the Organs of Reſpiration; and We ſhould gaſp for Breath, with as much Difficulty, with as little Succeſs, as Fiſhes haled from their native Element.

The *Ground* alſo is wrought into the moſt proper Temperature. Was it of a *firmer* Conſiſtence, it would be impenetrable to the Plough, and unmanageable by the Spade.—Was it of a *laxer* Compoſition,

* If the Reader has Patience to go through the following Eſſay, He will find it, in the Iſſue, not altogether foreign to the main Subject.—If He pleaſes to conſider it, as a kind of *practical Comment*, on that lovely Celebration of providential Goodneſs, *His tender Mercies are over all his Works*—This may poſſibly alleviate the Toil of peruſing, and reconcile Him to the Length of the Deſcant.

poſition, it would be incapable of ſupporting its own Furniture. The light Mold would be ſwept away by whirling Winds; or the oozy Glebe ſoaked into Sloughs by the deſcending Rains.—Becauſe, every Situation ſuits not every Plant; but that which is a Nurſe to one, often proves a Step-mother to others; therefore, the Qualities of the Earth are ſo abundantly diverſified, as properly to accommodate every Species of Vegetation. We have a Variety of Intermediate Soils, from the *looſe* diſjointed Sand, to the *ſtiff* coheſive Clay: from the rough Projections of the *craggy* Cliff, to the ſoftly ſwelling Bed of the *ſmooth* Parterre.

The *Sea* carries equal Evidences of a moſt wiſe and gracious Ordination.—Was it *larger*, We ſhould want Land for the Purpoſes of Paſturage, and the Operations of Huſbandry. We ſhould be deſtitute of ſufficient Room for Mines and Foreſts; our ſubterranean Warehouſes, and our aerial Timber-Yards.—Was it *ſmaller*, it would not be capable of recruiting the Sky, with a proper Quantity of vaporous Exhalations; nor of ſupplying the Earth with the neceſſary Quota of fructifying Showers.

Do We not diſcern very apparent Strokes of Skill, and the moſt pregnant Proofs of Goodneſs, in each individual Object? In the various *Tenants* of the Globe, and the ſeveral *Appurtenances* of this great Dwelling?—It is needleſs to expatiate upon the more eminent and conſpicuous Beauties; all that *ſhines* in the Heavens, and all that *ſmiles* on the Earth. Theſe ſpeak to every Ear, theſe ſhew to every Eye, the adorable Munificence of their MAKER.—It is needleſs to launch into the Praiſes

Praiſes of the Valleys, delicately clothed with Herbage; or of the Fields, richly repleniſhed with Corn. Even the *ragged* Rocks, which frown over the Flood; the *caverned* Quarries, which yawn amidſt the Land; together with the Mountains, thoſe *ſhapeleſs* and *enormous* Protuberances, which ſeem to load the Ground, and incumber the Skies; even theſe contribute their Share, to increaſe the general Pleaſure, and augment the general Uſefulneſs. They variegate the Proſpect; raiſe an agreeable Horror in the Beholder; and inſpire his Breaſt with a religious Awe. They add new Charms to the wide Level of our Plains; and ſhelter, like a Screen, the warm Lap of our Vales.

We are delighted with the ſolemn Gloom, and magnificent Aſpect, of the Foreſt. One, who ſaw the Cedars of *Lebanon*, was tranſported with Admiration, at their ample Trunks, and towering Heads; their diffuſive Spread, and verdant Grandeur. Compared with which, the ſtately Elm is but a Reed; and the branching Oak a mere Shrub *.—Was our Sight qualified for the Search, We ſhould diſcover a *Symmetry* and a *Dignity*, altogether as perfect, and far more wonderful, in thoſe Groves of *Moſs* †, which

* Mr. *Maundrel* tells Us, He meaſured one of the Cedars of *Lebanon*, and "found it ſix and thirty Feet "and ſix Inches thick; its Branches ſpread an hundred "and eleven Feet; its Trunk from the Ground was "about ſixteen Feet, and then divided into five Branches, "each of which would make a large Tree."

† See, for a Proof of this Remark, the Explanation of the *tenth Plate*, in that very curious, very entertaining, and no leſs inſtructive Piece, intitled *Micrographia Reſtaurata*.—Where our Author compares the Size of this little Vegetable, with the Dimenſions of thoſe vaſt Trees,

which adhere to the rude Stone. We ſhould contemplate, with greater Surpriſe, if not with greater Rapture, thoſe diminutive Plantations; which ſtrike their haſty Roots in the mouldy Confection, or wave their curious Umbrage over the periſhed Pickle *.

Who is not charmed with the Vine, and its generous warming Juices? With the Melon, and its delicious cooling Pulp? Yet, were all our Trees to produce Fruits of ſuch exalted Qualities, or of ſuch an agreeable Reliſh, what would become of the *Birds!* How ſmall a Scantling of ſuch choice Delicacies, would voracious Man reſign to their Enjoyment?—That Proviſion may be made for the meaneſt *Vagrant* of the Air, as well as for the moſt renowned Sovereign of a Nation; there is, in all Places, a large Growth of Shrubs, covered annually with a Harveſt of coarſe and hardy Berries. So *coarſe* in their Taſte, that they are unworthy of the Acceptance

Trees, which grow in the vigorous Climates of *Guinea* and *Brazil*. The Trunks of which are, according to the Report of Travelers, twenty Feet in Diameter. Whereas, the Body of this minute Plant, meaſures no more than the ſixtieth Part of an Inch. The Thickneſs of the former, exceeding that of the latter, 2,985,984 Millions of Times.—So prodigiouſly various are the Works of the CREATOR.

* That whitiſh kind of Down, which ſhags the putrefying Pickle; which incruſts the Surface of ſome corrupted Liquors; and conſtitutes what we call *Mouldineſs*; is really a Cluſter of little Plants. Each has a Root and a Stalk: Each ſpreads its Branches, and produces Seed in Abundance.

Radiceſque ſuas habet, exilemque Coronam,
Frondeſque, Fructumque gerit, velut arduæ Quercus.

Acceptance of Man: ſo *hardy* in their Make, that they endure the extremeſt Severities of the Weather; and furniſh the feathered Tribe with a ſtanding Repaſt, amidſt all the Deſolations of Winter.

The Fir, with her ſilver Bark, and ſhapely Cone; the Beech *, with her quivering Leaves and embowering Shade; are ſtately Decorations of our rural Seats. But, if there were no intangling *Thickets*, no prickly *Thorns*, where would the Farmer procure Fences, ſo cloſely wattled, or ſo ſtrongly armed †? How could He guard the Scene of his Labours, or ſecure his vegetable Wealth, from the Flocks

* The *Fir*, the *Beech*, and ſuch like Trees, are called in *Hebrew*, נהלים Iſai. vii. 19. Which Word is rendered, but I think very improperly, *Buſhes*. It rather ſignifies the *grand* and moſt *admired* Plants. It is intended as a Contraſt to the coarſe and deſpicable Thorns, mentioned in the preceding Clauſe. And both taken together expreſs all Sorts of Trees, from the towering Cedar to the groveling Shrub.

† Something to this Purpoſe is hinted in the Prophecy of *Iſaiah*, by יראת שמיר ושית *Terriculamentum Sentium & Veprium*: There ſhall not come thither, *the Terror of Thorns and Briars*. Meaning thoſe ſharp and ragged Mounds, with which Vineyards, Corn-fields, and other cultivated Spots, were uſually incloſed. Which *deterred* the moſt adventurous Cattle from forcing, or attempting to force, a Paſſage.—The Words are ſomewhat obſcure, and have been greatly miſunderſtood. But, thus interpreted, they afford an eaſy Senſe. They perfectly coincide with the Context, which foretels and deſcribes an univerſal *Deſolation*. "Places, formerly "fenced about with Abundance of Care, ſhall lie expoſed to every wandering and every miſchievous Foot. "Tillage ſhall be diſcontinued; and the whole Country "degenerate into a confuſed, diſorderly Waſte; without either the Diſtributions of Property, or the Improvements of Induſtry." *Iſai.* vii. 25. Vid. VITRING. *in loc.*

Flocks and the Herds? Thoſe roving Plunderers, which accede to no Treaty, but that of *forcible* Reſtraint; ſubmit to no Laws, but thoſe of the *coercive* Kind.

Moſt People are fond of the Purſlane's fleſhy Leaves, and the ramified Fatneſs of the Brocoli: the Potato's mealy Orbs, and the Lentile's ſucculent Pods. We ſpare no Toil, We grudge no Expence, to have them flouriſh in our Gardens, and ſerved up at our Tables.—But there are innumerable Herbs, which paſs under the contemptible Character of *Weeds*; and yet are altogether as deſirable to many Claſſes of Creatures, as theſe culinary Gifts to Mankind. Who ſhall be at the Pains to plant, to water, to cultivate, ſuch deſpicable Productions? Man would rather *extripate*, than *propagate*, theſe Incumbrances of his Acres. Therefore Providence vouchſafes to be their Gardener. Providence has wrought off their Seeds into ſuch a Lightneſs of Subſtance, that they are carried abroad with the Undulations of the Air. Or, if too heavy to be wafted by the Breeze, they are faſtened to Wings of Down, which facilitate their Flight. Or elſe, are incloſed in a ſpringy Caſe; which, forcibly burſting, ſhoots and ſpreads them on every Side.—By ſome ſuch means, the reproducing Principle is diſſeminated; the univerſal Granary is filled; and the univerſal Board furniſhed. The buzzing Inſect, and the creeping Worm, have each his *Bill of Fare*. Each enjoys a never-failing Treat, equivalent to our fineſt Veniſon, or to the "Fat "of Kidneys of Wheat *."

As

* *The Fat of Kidneys of Wheat*, Deut. xxxii. 14. A Sentence, rich with Elegance! Such as would have

As the Seeds of ſome Plants are moſt artfully ſcattered abroad, when ripe; the Seeds of others are moſt carefully *guarded*, till they come to Maturity; and, by both Contrivances, every Species is not barely preſerved, but in a manner eternized.—Some are lodged in the Center of a large *Pulp*; which is, at once, their Defence, and their Nouriſhment. This We find exemplified in the taſteful Apple, and the juicy Pear.—Some, beſides the ſurrounding Pulp, are incloſed in a thick *Shell*, hard and impenetrable as Stone. We cannot pluck and eat one of thoſe downy Peaches, or incrimſoned Nectarines, which ſo beautifully emboſs the Wall, without finding a Proof of this Precaution.—Caſt your Eye upon the Walnuts, which ſtud the Branches of that ſpreading Tree. Before theſe are gathered, the Increaſe of the Cold, and the Emptineſs of the Gardens, will ſharpen the Appetite of the Birds. To ſecure the fine Kernel from the Depredations of their buſy aſſailing Bills, it is fortified with a ſtrong *Incloſure* of Wood, and with the Addition of a diſguſtful bitter *Rind*.

If *Graſs* was as ſcarce as the *Guernſey-Lily*; or as difficultly raiſed as the delicate Tuberoſe; how certainly, and how ſpeedily, muſt many Millions of Quadrupeds

ſhone in *Pindar*, or been admired by *Longinus*. Yet, I believe, its principal Beauty conſiſts, in an Alluſion to a remarkable *Jewiſh* Rite. In every Sacrifice, the Fat of the Kidneys was, as the moſt delicious Part of the Victim, ſet apart for GOD, and conſumed on his Altar. Here, even the common People were treated like the DEITY. They lay under no Reſtraint, either from the divine Prohibition, or the Scarcity of the Grain. But were copiouſly ſupplied, and freely regaled themſelves with the *choiceſt fineſt* Part of this firſt and beſt of Vegetables.

Quadrupeds periſh with Famine! Since all the Cattle owe their chief Subſiſtence to this Vegetable, by a ſingular Beneficence in the Divine Oeconomy, *it waiteth not*, like the Corn-field and the Garden-bed, *for* the annual Labours of *Man* *. When once ſown, though ever ſo frequently croped, it revives with the returning Spring, and flouriſhes in a kind of perennial Verdure. It covers our Meadows; diffuſes itſelf over our Plains; ſprings up in every Glade of the Foreſt; and ſpreads a Side-board in the moſt ſequeſtered Nook.

Since the Nutriment of Vegetables themſelves, lies hid under the Soil, or floats up and down in the Air: *beneath*, they plunge their Roots † into the Ground, and diſperſe every Way their fibrous Suckers, to explore the latent, and attract the proper Nouriſhment: *above*, they expand a Multitude of Leaves †, which, like ſo many open Mouths, catch the Rains as they fall; imbibe the Dews as they diſtil; and tranſmit them through their nice Orifices, to the Heart of the Plant, or the Lobes of the Fruit.

I have touched upon the *inſenſible* Creation; and pointed out the Care of a condeſcending Providence, exerciſed over theſe loweſt Formations of Nature.—The *animal* World, *Theron*, falls to your Share. It is yours, to deſcant upon thoſe higher Orders of Exiſtence: yours, to ſhew Us the Goodneſs of GOD, extending its indulgent Regards to them,

* Mic. v. 7.

†† *Job* very beautifully refers to theſe two Sources of vegetable Fertility; *My Root was ſpread out by the Waters, and the Dew lay all Night upon my Branch.* Job xxix. 19.

their Welfare, and all their Intereſts.—And how pleaſing a Speculation muſt it be, to conſider the univerſal Parent, ſpreading the Wings of his Benevolence, wide as the Arches of Heaven, over the immenſe Houſhold of his Creatures! Cheriſhing all the Families of Earth, and Air and Skies, as tenderly, as officiouſly, as the Hen * cheriſhes her infant Brood, when ſhe opens to them her warm Boſom, and covers them with her ſoft vital Down.

Ther. The Subject is in good Hands. Let *Part the ſecond* be of the ſame Strain with *Part the firſt*, and there will be no Occaſion to wiſh for a new Speaker. As to myſelf I have very little Inclination to talk. But I have an Ear open and attentive to your Diſcourſe.

Aſp. You put me in mind of the Philoſopher, who preſumed to read a Lecture on the Art of War, in the Preſence of *Hannibal*. But his Impertinence was *voluntary*, mine is *conſtrained*.—Since You injoin me this Office, let Us paſs from the vegetable, to the animal World. Here We ſhall not find any Tribe, nor any Individual neglected. The ſuperior Claſſes want no Demonſtration of their excellent Accompliſhments. At the firſt Glimpſe, they challenge our Approbation; they command our Applauſe. Even the *more ignoble* Forms of animated Exiſtence, are moſt wiſely circumſtanced, and moſt liberally accommodated.

They

* This ſeems to be the Image, to which the Pſalmiſt alludes. *Pſal.* cxlv. 9. This is the expreſs Repreſentation, which our SAVIOUR uſes. *Matt.* xxiii. 37. And a moſt amiable Image, as well as a moſt picturesque Repreſentation, it is.

They generate in that particular Seaſon, which is ſure to ſupply them with a Stock of Proviſion, ſufficient both for themſelves, and their increaſing Families.—The Birds lay their Eggs, and hatch their Young, when *Myriads* of new-born, tender Inſects ſwarm on every Side. So that the Caterers, whether they be the male or female Parents, need only to alight on the Ground, or make a little Excurſion into the Air; and they meet with a Feaſt ready dreſt, and all at free Coſt, for the clamant Mouths at home.—If the Sheep are an Exception to this Rule, it is becauſe they are conſigned over to the Maintenance and Protection of Man. Becauſe, they are *tame* and will admit, are *valuable* and will recompenſe, his aſſiduous Attendance. He therefore, when they yean, fills their Cribs with Fodder; and this fills their Udders with Milk. The Lambs, hardened by the Cold, become vigorous and lively: and, when their milky Diet fails, they find a Profuſion of nutrimental Herbage on the Soil.

Their Love to their Offspring, while they continue in a helpleſs State, is *invincibly* ſtrong. Whereas, the very Moment they are able to ſhift for themſelves; when the parental Affection would be attended with much Solicitude, and productive of no Advantage; it *vaniſhes*, as though it had never exiſted.—The Hen, while marching at the Head of her little Brood, would fly in the Eyes of a Maſtiff, or even encounter a Lion, in their Defence. Yet, within a few Weeks, this inexpreſſible Tenderneſs turns to Indifference. She abandons her Chickens to the wide World, and not ſo much as knows them any more.

If the GOD of *Iſrael* inſpired *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab* with *Wiſdom, and Underſtanding, and Knowledge in all Manner of Workmanſhip* *: the GOD of Nature has inſtructed, has furniſhed with Skill and Caution, the wild Inhabitants of the Bough. —The *Skill*, with which they erect their Houſes, and adjuſt their Apartments, is inimitable. The *Caution*, with which they ſecrete their Abodes from the ſearching Eye, or intruding Foot, is admirable. No General, though fruitful in Expedients, could plan a more artful Concealment. No Architect, with his Rule and Line, could build ſo commodious a Lodgment.—Give the moſt celebrated Artificer the ſame Materials, which theſe weak and unexperienced Creatures uſe. Let a *Jones*, or a *De Moivre*, have only ſome rude Straws or ugly Sticks; a few Bits of Dirt, or Scraps of Hair; a ſorry Lock of Wool, or a coarſe Sprig of Moſs; and what Works, fair with Delicacy, or fit for Service, could *they* produce?

We extol the Commander, who knows how to take Advantage of the Ground. Who can make the Sun and Wind fight for Him, as well as his Troops. And, by every Incident, embarraſſes the Forces of the Enemy, but expedites the Action, and facilitates the Succeſs of his own. Does not this Praiſe belong to our *feathery Leaders?* Who pitch their Tent, or (if you pleaſe) fix their penſile Camp, ſometimes on thoſe lofty, ſometimes on thoſe projecting Branches; that wave in the upper Regions of the Air, or dance over the Eddies of the Stream. By which judicious Diſpoſition, the vernal

* Exod. xxxi. 3.

nal Gales rock their Cradle, and the murmuring Waters lull their Young. While both theſe Circumſtances, ſo advantageous to themſelves, terrify the Shepherd, and keep the School-Boy at a trembling Diſtance.—Some hide their little Houſhold from View, amidſt the Shelter of intangled Furze. Others remove it from Reach, in the Center of a thorny Thicket. By one Stratagem or another, they are generally as *ſecure* and *unmoleſted*, in their feeble Habitations; as the Foxes, which intrench themſelves deep in the Earth; or as the Conies, which *make their Houſes in the Rock* *.

If the *Swan* has large ſweeping Wings, and a copious Stock of Feathers, to ſpread over her callow Brood; the *Wren* makes up by Contrivance, what is deficient in her Bulk.—Small as ſhe is, ſhe intends † to bring forth, and will be obliged to nurſe up, a very numerous Iſſue. Therefore, with the correcteſt Judgment She deſigns, and with indefatigable Aſſiduity finiſhes, a Neſt proper for her Purpoſe. It is a neat *Rotund*; lengthened into an

* Prov. xxx. 26.

† *Aſpaſio* has ventured to ſay, *She intends*—And one is almoſt tempted to think, from the Preparation which the little Creature makes, that She had really ſet down, and counted the Coſt, and concerted her Scheme. As though ſhe had deliberated with Herſelf—" I ſhall lay, " not a Couple of Eggs, but near a Score. From theſe " I am to produce a Houſe full of Young. But how " ſhall I have Warmth (unleſs Art ſupply, what Nature " has denied) ſufficient to hatch the Embrios, or cheriſh " the Infants?"—The Truth, I believe, is; That, in all her ſeeming Foreſight, and circumſpect Behaviour, She acts, She knows not what. Only She acts, what eternal Wiſdom knows to be neceſſary, and what all-condeſcending Goodneſs prompts her to perform.

Oval; bottomed and vaulted with a regular *Concave*. To preſerve it from Rain, it has ſeveral Coatings of Moſs. To defend it from Cold, it has but one Window, and only a ſingle Door; or rather, the Window and the Door are the ſame. To render it both elegant and comfortable, it has *Carpets* and *Hangings* of the fineſt ſofteſt Down.—By the Help of this curious Manſion, our little Lady becomes the Mother of Multitudes. The vivifying Heat of her Body is, during the Time of Incubation, exceedingly augmented. Her Houſe is like an Oven, and greatly aſſiſts in hatching her Young. Which no ſooner burſt the Shell, than they find themſelves ſcreened from the Annoyance of the Weather; and moſt agreeably repoſed, amidſt the Ornaments of a Palace, and the Warmth of a Bagnio.

Perhaps, We have been accuſtomed to look upon the Inſects, as ſo many *rude* Scraps of Creation, and to rank them amongſt the *Refuſe* of Things. Whereas, if We examine them, without Prejudice, and with a little Attention, they will appear ſome of the moſt finiſhed Pieces of divine Workmanſhip.

Many of them are decked with a Profuſion of Finery. Their *Eyes* are an Aſſemblage * of Microſcopes:

* The *common Fly*, for Inſtance. Who has many natural Enemies; and, by a certain petulant Familiarity, or malapert Officiouſneſs, creates to Herſelf many more. Whenever She has a Fancy for it, She will take a Lion by his Beard; and makes no Scruple to ſet her Foot, upon the Noſe of a King. On Account of this unceremonious and blunt Behaviour, every Body quarrels with her. Every Hand and every Foot is lifted up againſt Her. She

croſcopes: whoſe Mechaniſm is inconceivably nice; whoſe Poliſh is exquiſitely delicate; and whoſe whole Form is touched into the higheſt Perfection. Their Cloathing has all the Variety and Luſtre of Colours. It is ſet with an Arrangement of Pearl, of Diamonds, and Gold. It is bordered with Fringes, or lined with Furs, richer far than Silks and Velvets. In ſhort; their Cloathing is not to be equalled, as to Delicacy and Splendour, even by the moſt brilliant Court: no, not amidſt all its Blaze of Gems, and Pomp of Dreſs.

Their *Wings* are the fineſt Expanſions imaginable. Cambric is mere Canvaſs, and Lawn is coarſe as Sack-cloth, compared with thoſe inimitable Webs. The *Caſes*, which incloſe their Wings, glitter

She finds no Quarter, from the moſt generous of Men, or the moſt harmleſs of Animals.—Surely then She has Cauſe to be peculiarly circumſpect and vigilant. Yet her Head is ſo fixed, that it is incapable of *turning*, in order to obſerve what paſſes, either behind or around Her.

Under ſo great a Diſadvantage, and amidſt ſuch *unparalleled* Dangers, how can She eſcape Deſtruction? It would be abſolutely impoſſible; had She not an Expedient for her Preſervation, altogether as extraordinary, as her Condition is perilous.—PROVIDENCE, ſurpriſingly wiſe in its Contrivances, and equally bountiful in its Gifts, has furniſhed Her, not barely with a *Retinue*, but with more than a *Legion* of Eyes. Inſomuch, that a ſingle Fly is ſuppoſed to be Miſtreſs of no leſs than eight thouſand. Every one of which is lined with a diſtinct optic Nerve. Every one of which is a Kind of Centinel, that always keeps an exact Look out; and is ever ready to apprize her of the leaſt approaching Harm. Or, to ſpeak more plainly, by Means of this coſtly and amazing Apparatus, the little Creature ſees on every Side, with the utmoſt Eaſe and with inſtantaneous Speed; even without any Motion of the Eye, or any Flection of the Neck.

glitter with the moſt gloſſy Varniſh; are ſcooped into ornamental Flutings; are ſtudded with radiant Spots; or pinked with elegant Holes.—Not any among them but are equiped with Weapons, or endued with Dexterity, which qualify them to ſeize their Prey, or eſcape their Foe; to diſpatch the Buſineſs of their reſpective Station, and enjoy the Pleaſures of their particular Condition.

Now I am in a talking Humour, give me leave to celebrate the Endowments, and aſſert the Honours of my puny Clients. Yet, not ſo much to ſupport *their* Credit, as to magnify their *all-gracious* CREATOR.—What? If the Elephant is diſtinguiſhed by a huge *Proboſcis?* His meaneſt Relations of the reptile Line, are furniſhed with curious *Antennæ* *; remarkable, if not for their enormous Magnitude, yet for their ready Flexibility, and acute Senſation. By which they explore their Way, even in the darkeſt Road: they diſcover and avoid, whatever might defile their neat Apparel, or endanger their tender Lives.

Every one admires that majeſtic Creature the *Horſe*; his graceful Head, and ample Cheſt; his arching Neck, and flowing Mane; his cleanly turned Limbs, and finely adjuſted Motions. With an impetuous Bound, He flings Himſelf over the Ditch;

* *Antennæ*, are thoſe very ſlender Parts, which, reſembling Horns or Briſtles, grow on the Head of various Inſects. Serving, as ſome Naturaliſts conjecture, for a Sort of *Weapon*, to defend the Eyes when endangered; or acting as a Kind of *Towel*, to wipe them when ſullied. Others ſuppoſe, that the Creature uſes them, as a blind or dim-ſighted Man uſes his Staff, to examine the Road, and feel out his Way. In Conformity to this Office, they are frequently called *Feelers*.

Ditch; and with a rapid Career, pours Himſelf * through the Plain. With unwearied Application, He carries his Rider from one End of the Country to another; and with undaunted Bravery, ruſhes into the fierceſt Rage, and amidſt the thickeſt Havock of the Battle.—Yet the *Ant*, in Proportion to its Size, is equally nimble; equally ſtrong; and will climb Precipices, which the moſt courageous Courſer dares not attempt to ſcale.—If the *Snail* is ſlower in her Motions, She is under no neceſſity of treading back the Ground, which She has paſſed. Becauſe, her Houſe is a Part of her traveling Equipage. So that whenever She goes abroad, She is ſtill under her own Roof; and wherever She ſtraggles, is always at Home.

Let None ſuppoſe, that being charged with the Weight of her Apartment, ſhe toils under an oppreſſive Burthen. No; the all-wiſe Projector of this portable Manſion, has given it two very ſingular Advantages; an extraordinary Solidity, and an uncommon Lightneſs. By means of the former, the Inhabitant dwells in Security. By means of the latter, the Habitation is transferred with Eaſe.—Were her Eyes ſunk as low, as the Body which She trails along the Ground, they would yield but little Service, and be expoſed to continual Danger. Both theſe Evils are prevented by an Expedient, which None but a GOD, who is *wonderful in Counſel*, could have deviſed; and which None

* *Pours Himſelf*—This is *Jeremiah*'s beautiful and expreſſive Phraſe, כסום שטף Chap. viii. 6. Which *Virgil* has been ambitious to imitate;

Ruuntque effuſi Carcere.
Seſe effudêre Quadrigæ.

None but a GOD, who is infinite in Benignity, would have deviſed for ſuch a Reptile. As the Fly has her *Microſcopes*, the Snail has her *Teleſcopes*. Her Eyes are fixed on the Extremity of four delicately ſhaped Tubes *. Surpaſſing, as to curious Contrivance and wonderful Agency, far ſurpaſſing, all the Inſtruments in the Optician's Shop, and every artificial Rarity in *Sloane*'s Collection.—Theſe Tubes, terminated with their living Glaſſes, the dextrous Manager lengthens or contracts, at her Pleaſure; ſtraitens like an Arrow, or bends like an Oſier. Theſe She ſheaths in her Head, when She has no Occaſion to uſe them, nor any Inclination to look about Her. Or elſe, elevates them to a conſiderable Height; turns them in any Direction; and applies them to any Object.—*How excellent is thy Loving-Kindneſs, O GOD!* How rich thy Munificence! And both vouchſafed (moſt amiable Condeſcenſion!) even to a crawling Inſect! Surely then *the Children of Men may* reaſonably, may confidently *put their Truſt under the Shadow of thy Wings* †.

But ſee! The *Eagle* ſtretches her Pinions, and demands our Notice. The *Eagle* is privileged with Pinions, that out-ſtrip the Wind. Elevated on which, She looks down on all that ſoars; and ſees flying Clouds, and ſtraining Wings, far below. Her optic Nerve ſo *ſtrong*, that it meets and ſuſtains

* You are not to imagine, that thoſe Projections, which are commonly called the Snails Horns, are really ſuch. They are four Tubes, with a Glaſs fixed in the Extremity of each; or they may be called four optic Nerves, ending in as many beautiful Eyes.

See *Nat. Diſpl.* Vol. I.

† Pſal. xxxvi. 7.

tains the dazzling Beams of Noon: her wide ſurveying Glance ſo *keen*, that, from the moſt towering Heights, it diſcerns the ſmalleſt Fiſh, which ſculks at the very Bottom of the River.—The *Mole*, 'tis true, is none of your ſprightly or exalted Geniuſes; but an humble hardy Drudge. The Mole, I am ſenſible, is no Favourite with Mankind; but deſpiſed and perſecuted, as an abominable Outcaſt. Yet even this poor Outcaſt, in her groveling and gloomy State, is far from being diſregarded by divine Providence. Becauſe ſhe is to dig a Cell in the Earth, and dwell, as it were, in a perpetual Dungeon, her Paws ſerve her for a Pick-axe and Spade. Her Eye, or rather her viſual Speck, is ſunk deep into a Socket, that it may ſuffer no Injury from her rugged Situation: it requires but a very ſcanty Communication of Light, that ſhe may have no Reaſon to complain of her darkling Abode. I called her ſubterranean Habitation a Dungeon; and ſome People, perhaps, may think it a Grave. But I revoke the Expreſſion. It yields her all the Safety of a fortified *Caſtle*, and all the Delight of a decorated *Grot*.

Even the *Spider*, though abhorred by Mankind, is evidently the Care of all-ſuſtaining Heaven. She is to live upon Plunder; to ſupport Herſelf, by trepaning the idle, inſignificant, ſauntering Fly. Suitably to ſuch an Occupation, ſhe poſſeſſes a Bag of glutinous Moiſture. From this ſhe ſpins a clammy *Thread*, and weaves it into a tenacious *Net*. Expert as any practiſed Sportſman, ſhe always ſpreads it in the moſt opportune Places. Senſible that her Appearance would create Horror, and deter the Prey from approaching her Snare, when

watching for Sport, ſhe retires from Sight. But conſtantly keeps within Diſtance, ſo as to receive the very firſt Intelligence of what paſſes in the Toils; and be ready to launch, without a Moment's Delay, upon the ſtruggling Captive. And what is very obſervable, when Winter chills the Earth, and no more Inſects ramble amidſt the Air, foreſeeing that her Labour would be vain, ſhe diſcontinues her Work, and abandons her Stand.

I muſt by no means forget the little Monarchy, which inhabits the Hive. The *Bees* are to ſubſiſt, not as a lawleſs Banditti, but as a regular Community. 'Tis theirs, to earn a decent Livelihood by honeſt Induſtry; not to glut themſelves with Carnage, or enrich themſelves by Rapine. For which Purpoſe, they are actuated by an invariable Inclination to Society. They poſſeſs the trueſt Notions of domeſtic Oeconomy, and have enacted the wiſeſt Laws for political Government.—Their indulgent CREATOR has made them a Preſent of all neceſſary Implements, both for conſtructing their *Combs*, and for compoſing their *Honey*. They have each a natural Pannier, with which they bring Home their collected Sweets: and they form for themſelves the moſt commodious Storehouſes, in which they depoſit their delicious Wares.—Though made for Peace, they know how to uſe the Sword. They can take up Arms with the utmoſt Reſolution and Intrepidity, when Arms are requiſite to guard their Wealth, or repel their Foes.—Without going through a Courſe of Botany, they can readily diſtinguiſh every Plant, which is moſt likely to yield the Materials proper for their Buſineſs. Without ſerving an Apprenticeſhip in the Laboratory, they

are

are complete Practitioners in the Art of Separation and Refinement. They are aware, without borrowing their Information from an Almanack, that the vernal Gleams, and Summer Suns, continue but for a Seaſon. Mindful of this Admonition *, they improve to the utmoſt every ſhining Hour; and lay up a Stock of balmy Treaſures, ſufficient to ſupply the whole State, till the Bloſſoms open afreſh, and their flowery Harveſt returns.

Let the *Peacock* boaſt, if he pleaſes, his elegant Topknot and lofty Mien; his Neck adorned with varying Dyes, and his Train beſpangled with a Round of Stars.—Yet let him know, that the deſpiſed *Butterfly*, and even the lothed *Catterpillar*, are as ſumptuouſly arrayed as Himſelf. Their Gems ſparkle with as high a Luſtre. Their Robes glow with as great a Profuſion of Colours. Nay; all their Ornaments have, in Point of Elegance and Delicacy, juſt the ſame Superiority to his, as the *Phaeton* engraved on a Connoiſſeur's Ring †, has to the *Phaeton* carved in a Statuary's Shop.

Does Beauty ſit in State on that lordly Bird? She ſhines in Miniature on the vulgar Inſect. Is the Maſter of this lower Creation, ennobled with the *Powers* of *Reaſon?* The meaneſt Claſſes of ſenſitive Exiſtence, are endued with the *Faculty* of *Inſtinct*. Which gives them a Sagacity, that is neither derived from Obſervation, nor waits for the Finiſhings of Experience: which, without a Tutor, teaches them all neceſſary Skill; and enables them, without a Pattern, to perform every needful

* *Venturæque Hyemis memores, Æſtate Laborem*
Experiuntur, & in medium quæſita reponunt. VIRG.

† See DERHAM's *Phyſ. Theol.* B. viii. C. 4.

needful Operation. And, what is far more ſurpriſing, never miſleads them, either into erroneous Principles, or pernicious Practices: never fails them, in the niceſt or moſt arduous of their Undertakings *.

Can you have Patience to follow me, if I ſtep into a different Element, and juſt viſit the *watery World?*—Not one among the innumerable Myriads, which ſwim the boundleſs Ocean, but is watched over by that exalted Eye, whoſe Smiles irradiate the Heaven of Heavens. Not one, but is ſupported by that Almighty Hand, which crowns Angels and Archangels with Glory.—The condeſcending GOD, has not only created, but *beautified* them. He has given the moſt exact Proportion to their Shape, and the gayeſt Colours to their Apparel; a poliſhed Smoothneſs to their Scales, and a remarkable Sleekineſs to their Skin. The Eyes of ſome are ſurrounded with a ſcarlet Circle; the Back of others is diverſified with crimſon Stains. View them, when they glance along the Stream, or while they are freſh from their native Brine; and the burniſhed Silver is not more bright, the radiant Rainbow is ſcarce more glowing, than their vivid, gliſtering, gloſſy Hues.

Yet, notwithſtanding the Finery of their Apparel, We are under painful Apprehenſions for their Welfare.—How can the poor Creatures live, amidſt the ſuffocating Waters?—As they have neither Hands, nor Feet, nor Wings, how can they tranſact

* *In his*, ſays *Pliny*, ſpeaking of Inſects, *tam parvis atque nullis, quæ Ratio, quanta Vis, quam inextricabilis Perfectio!*

tranſact their Affairs, or how eſcape their Enemies? —We are ſoon freed from our Fears by obſerving, that they all poſſeſs the beneficial, as well as ornamental Furniture of *Fins*. Theſe, when expanded, like Maſts above, and Ballaſt below, poiſe their floating Bodies, and keep them ſteadily upright.—We obſerve, with farther Satisfaction, the *flexible* Play, and *vigorous* Activity of their Tails. With which they turn ſhort; ſpring forwards; and ſhoot themſelves through the Paths of the Sea, more ſwiftly than Sails and Oars can waft the Royal Yatch.—But we are loſt in Wonder, at the exquiſite Contrivance, and delicate Formation of their *Gills*. By which they are accommodated, even in that denſe Medium, with the Power of Breathing, and the Benefits of Reſpiration. A Piece of Mechaniſm this, indulged to the meaneſt of the Fry; yet ſurpaſſing, infinitely ſurpaſſing, in the Fineneſs of its Structure, and the Facility of its Operation, whatever is curious in the Works of Art, or commodious in the Palaces of Princes.

Ther. Some Perſons, *Aſpaſio*, have the Art of giving *Dignity* to trivial, and *Spirit* to jejune Topics. I cannot but liſten, with a pleaſed Attention, to your Diſcourſe; though it deſcends to the loweſt Scenes, and meaneſt Productions of Nature.—To make ſuch philoſophical Remarks, was uſually *my* Province; to add the religious Improvement, *yours*. But my Thoughts, at preſent, are wholly taken up with the Conſideration of my SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs. I can hardly turn my Views, or divert my Speech, to any other Subject. All thoſe amiable Appearances of the exter-

nal Creation, which I was wont to contemplate with Rapture, afford but a languid Entertainment to my Mind.—Till my Intereſt in this Divine REDEEMER is aſcertained, the Spring may bloom; the Summer ſhine; and Autumn ſwell with Fruits: but it will be Winter, chearleſs, gloomy, deſolate *Winter* in my Soul.

Aſp. You ſay, *Theron*, You attended to my curſory Hints. Then, your own ſuperior Diſcernment could not but perceive, how every Part of the exterior World is adjuſted, in the moſt excellent and gracious Manner.—Not the *coarſeſt* Piece of inactive Matter, but bears the Impreſs of its MAKER's faſhioning Skill. Not a *ſingle* Creature, however inſignificant, but exhibits evident Demonſtrations of his providential Care. His Hand is liberal, profuſely liberal, to all that breathes, and all that has a Being.

Let me only aſk—and to introduce this Queſtion, with the greater Propriety; to give it a more forcible Energy on our Minds; was the principal Deſign of the preceding Remarks—Let me aſk; *Does GOD take Care for Oxen* ?* Is He a generous Benefactor to the meaneſt Animals, to the loweſt Reptiles? Are his munificent Regards extended farther ſtill, and vouchſafed even to the moſt abject worthleſs Vegetables? And ſhall they be with-held from *You*, my dear Friend, or from *me?*—Not one among all the numberleſs Productions, which tread the Ground, or ſtand rooted to the Soil, wants any Convenience, that is proper for its reſpective State. And will his heavenly FATHER deny *Theron*, what

* 1 Cor. ix. 9.

what is ſo neceſſary to his preſent Comfort, and his final Happineſs? Impoſſible *!

Ther. I wiſh for, but I can hardly hope to partake of, that ſpiritual Bleſſing; which always included my whole Happineſs, and now ingroſſes my whole Concern.

Aſp. Not hope to partake of!—What Pretence, what Shadow of Foundation, has this deſponding Temper, either in Reaſon, or in Scripture? Is it not evident from the whole Book of Revelation? Is it not apparent, through the whole Compaſs of Nature? That the Almighty LORD, "who governeth the World with the Palm of his Hand †," is remote, infinitely remote, from a niggardly Diſpoſition. He not only provideth for the Wants, but even *ſatisfieth the Deſire of every living Thing* ‡.

* I know not how to forbear tranſcribing a Paragraph, from one of our periodical Papers; which contains a Propoſal for *adapting* natural Philoſophy to the Capacity of *Children*. Wiſhing, at the ſame time, that the ingenious Author would inlarge his Sketch into a Treatiſe; and execute the Plan, which He has ſo judiciouſly projected, and of which he has given Us ſo delicate a Specimen.

After ſome Remarks on the Sagacity of Birds, their Induſtry, and other ſurpriſing Properties, He adds;—"Is "it for Birds, O LORD, that Thou haſt joined toge"ther ſo many Miracles, which they have no Know"ledge of? Is it for Men who give no Attention to "them? Is it for the Curious, who are ſatisfied with ad"miring, without raiſing their Thoughts to Thee? Or "is it not rather viſible, that thy Deſign has been to call "Us to thyſelf, by ſuch a Spectacle? To make Us ſen"ſible of thy Providence and infinite Wiſdom; and to "fill Us with *Confidence*, in thy Bounty, who watcheſt, "with ſo much Care and Tenderneſs, over Birds, though "two of them are ſold but for a Farthing?"

† Eccluſ. xviii. 3. ‡ Pſal. cxlv. 16.

Conſider thoſe ſtately *Poppies*, which are now the principal Ornament of the Garden. They have no Tongue to requeſt the leaſt Favour. Yet the ever-gracious MAKER, clothes them from his own Wardrobe, and decks them with exquiſite Beauty. —Obſerve the *young Ravens*, which ſit careleſly croaking on yonder Boughs. Do they cry * for Food? It is in hoarſe unarticulate Accents. Yet the all-ſupporting GOD, hears Meaning in their Noiſe; and ſupplies their every Need, from his own ſpontaneous Bounty.—If He accommodates the former, though incapable of aſking; if He attends to the latter, though inſenſible of their Benefactor; can He *diſregard* our preſſing Wants? Will He *reject* our earneſt Petitions? Eſpecially, when We ſeek ſuch pure and exalted Gifts, as it is both his Delight and his Honour to beſtow.

O! my Friend, look abroad into univerſal Nature, and look away every diſquieting Thought.

Ther. Did You inquire what Pretence I have for this deſponding Temper? Alas! I have more than a Pretence. I have a Reaſon. A Reaſon too obvious; my great *Unworthineſs!*

Aſp. Pray where was the Worthineſs of the ſtiff-necked *Iſraelites?* Yet the LORD *bare them, and carried them, all the Days of old* †.—Where was the Worthineſs of *Saul* the Blaſphemer? Yet the bleſſed *JESUS* made Him a choſen Veſſel, and ſet Him as a Signet on his Right-hand.—You deſerve nothing at the Hand of GOD our SAVIOUR. And what did *Joſeph*'s Brethren deſerve from the Viceroy of *Egypt?* Yet he delivered *them* from Famine, who ſold *Him* to Slavery. He ſettled them in

* Pſal. cxlvii. 9. † Iſai. lxii. 9.

in the choiceſt Territories, who caſt Him into the horrible Pit. He ſhewed Himſelf a Friend and a Father to thoſe unnatural Relations; who were his actual Betrayers, and his intentional Murderers.—And can You perſuade yourſelf, will You harbour a Suſpicion, that *CHRIST* is leſs compaſſionate than *Joſeph?* Shall a frail Mortal out-vie *IMMANUEL* in Beneficence?

Ther. Is not *ſome* Righteouſneſs of our own indiſpenſibly required, in order to our Participation of the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST.*

Aſp. Yes, ſuch a Righteouſneſs as *Zaccheus* the Publican, or the *Philippian* Jailor poſſeſſed.—*Zaccheus* was a Man of infamous Character, and Chief among the Extortioners. The Jailor was a barbarous Perſecutor, and in Purpoſe a Self-murderer. Yet our LORD ſays to the former; *This Day*, without enjoining any Courſe of previous Preparation; this very Day, *will I abide at thy Houſe.* And bring even to ſuch a ſcandalous * Dwelling, impart even to its profligate † Owner, my great Salvation. St. *Paul* directs the latter, without inſiſting upon any antecedent Duty or Reformation, to *believe on the LORD JESUS.* And aſſures the poor Sinner, trembling on the very Brink of Deſpair, that, in ſo doing, He *ſhall be ſaved.*

 "Thus,

* *Scandalous*—For the Neighbours ſay, on this Occaſion, *He is gone to be Gueſt with a Man, that is a Sinner*; a notorious Sinner. See the Import of αμαρτωλος, in ſuch a Connection, *Luke* vii. 37.

† *Profligate*—Neither is this too ſevere a Cenſure on *Zaccheus.* Becauſe, none but an abandoned ſhameleſs Wretch—No Son of *Abraham*, till He was loſt to all Senſe of Decency, would undertake the Office, which *the chief of the Publicans* exerciſed.

" Thus, might He have added, was I myſelf " ſaved. Not while I was exerciſing Righteouſ- " neſs; not when I had obtained Righteouſneſs; " but in the very midſt of my Ungodlineſs and " Cruelty. While I was *breathing out Threatnings* " *and Slaughter*, againſt the Diſciples of my LORD; " nay, when I *was drawing nigh to Damaſcus*, and " upon the Point of executing the moſt diabolical " Deſigns."

Are not theſe remarkable Caſes, ſo many *Acts and Precedents* of the Court of Heaven? Were they not recorded for our Obſervation, Imitation, and Comfort?—If ſo, nothing is required, in order to our Participation of *CHRIST* and his Benefits, but only that We *receive them*. Receive them, as the freeſt of Gifts, or as Matter of mere Grace, vouchſafed to the moſt Unworthy.

Ther. Is it not neceſſary, that We have, at leaſt, a Conviction of our Need of theſe Benefits, and a Senſe of their unſpeakable Worth?

Aſp. Not as the Condition of our enjoying them. Not as giving Us a Warrant to claim or poſſeſs them. The proper Buſineſs of ſuch Convictions is only to act as *Stimulatives*; exciting Us, earneſtly to covet, gladly to receive, the unſpeakably needful Gifts.—*Come*; only come; is our MASTER's Language. Without ſtaying to acquire any goodly Qualities, is his Meaning.—Our REDEEMER and his Benefits, are like a free Port. You enter, without paying any Duty. And though the Plague, the Plague of Guilt be in your Veſſel, You need not ſtay to perform Quarantine; no, nor delay a ſingle Moment.

Ther.

Ther. Surely, to come without any Holineſs, without any *decent* Preparative, muſt be a groſs *Indignity* to the Divine *JESUS*. Whoever preſents a Petition to any earthly Sovereign, will think it abſolutely neceſſary, not to appear in a ſlovenly Deſhabille, much leſs in filthy Raiment. Does not our LORD Himſelf, in the Parable of the Wedding-Garment, inculcate this very Point, and caution Us againſt a preſumptuous Approach?

Aſp. In this Parable, *CHRIST* is both the Bridegroom, the Feaſt, and the Wedding-Garment* And *who* are invited to an Union with this Bridegroom? To be Gueſts at this Feaſt? To be arrayed with this Wedding-Garment?—The Meſſengers are ſent, not to the Manſion-houſes of the Rich, or the Palaces of the Mighty; but to the *High-ways and Hedges*. Where Miſery mourns; and Poverty pines; and Baſeneſs hides her Head.—*To whom* is their Meſſage addreſſed? Not to the Amiable or Accompliſhed. But to the *Poor*, the *Maimed*, the *Halt*, the *Blind*†. Perſons, who have no recommending Endowments, but every *lotheſome* and *diſguſtful* Property. Yet theſe (mark the Paſſage, my Friend; mark well the encouraging Circumſtance) *theſe* are not only allowed, but intreated—importuned—and, by all the Arts of Perſuaſion, by every weighty or winning Motive, *compelled to come in*.—After all this, ſurely, it cannot be an Act of Preſumption to accept, but muſt be a Breach of Duty to refuſe the Invitation.

* *Matt.* xxii. 11. *Hæc Veſtis eſt Juſtitia CHRISTI.* BENGEL. in Loc.

† Luke xiv. 21.

Ther. You take no Notice of the Man, who was found without a Wedding-Garment. Which is by far the moſt *alarming* Incident, and that which gives me no ſmall Uneaſineſs.

Aſp. And does my *Theron* take proper Notice of the Divine Declaration? *I have prepared my Dinner*, ſays the KING eternal. *All Things are ready* *. "Whatever is neceſſary for the Juſtification, the "Holineſs, the complete Salvation of Sinners, is "provided in the Merit and the Grace of my "SON. Let them come therefore, as to a nup-"tial Banquet; and freely enjoy my Munificence; "and feaſt their Souls with the royal Proviſion."

The Man without a Wedding-Garment, denotes the ſpecious *ſuperficial* Profeſſor; who is *called by CHRIST*'s Name, but has never *put on CHRIST JESUS* by Faith.—Shall I tell You more plainly, whom this Character repreſents? You yourſelf, my dear *Theron*, was, ſome Months ago, in the State of this unhappy Creature. When You truſted in Yourſelf, and thought highly of your own, thought meanly of your SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs.—If your former Miſtakes made you reſemble Him, like a Partner or a Brother; take Heed, leſt your preſent Objections rank You in the Number of his Neighbours or Couſins.

Let Us imitate a better Example. Imitate the returning Prodigal. He came, with no Recommendation, either of Dreſs, of Perſon, or of Character. None but his Nakedneſs, his Miſery, and an Acknowledgment of Vileneſs, which had every aggravating, not one extenuating Circumſtance. Yet He was received—received with Indulgence—received with

* Matt. xxii. 4.

with Careſſes—and, without ſtaying to provide any handſome Apparel of his own, was cloathed with that *beſt Robe*, the Robe of a SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs.

Let Us accuſtom Ourſelves to conſider this incomparable Robe, under its proper evangelical Character. It is not a Matter of Bargain, nor the Subject of Sale, but a Gift. *The Gift of Righteouſneſs*, ſays the Apoſtle. And Gifts, We all agree, are not to be *purchaſed*, but *received*.—That We may not unaccountably neglect, what We ſo perfectly know, the Parable You mention, is a ſtrong, ſtanding, ſeaſonable Admonition. It teaches Us another Kind of Fear, than that which has alarmed your Mind. It teaches Us to fear, leſt, by *not accepting* this ſacred Gift, We incur the divine Diſpleaſure.

Ther. How, *Aſpaſio!* Can this be the Senſe of the Paſſage?

Aſp. The Gueſts, You know, conſiſted of poor Outcaſts. They were collected from the Highways and Hedges. Now We cannot ſuppoſe, that People in ſuch Circumſtances, from ſuch a Situation, and coming at a Minute's Warning, ſhould be able to furniſh themſelves with a Dreſs, ſuitable to the grand Occaſion. We muſt therefore ſuppoſe, (which is very conformable to the *eaſtern* Cuſtoms) that the King had ordered his Servants, to accommodate each Gueſt from the royal Wardrobe. That each might have this additional Token of his Sovereign's Favour; and all might be arrayed in a Manner, becoming the Magnificence of the Solemnity.—The unhappy Perſon, who *was bound Hand and Foot, and caſt into outer Darkneſs*, had, no

Doubt, an Offer of the nuptial Suit. But He refuſed, either to receive it, or to wear it; and rudely made his Appearance in his own Garments. Which, however they might comport with his private Station, or anſwer his perſonal Conveniencies, were infinitely too mean for this illuſtrious Ceremony.—The King, reſenting ſuch a Behaviour, as an Inſult on his Majeſty, and a Contempt of his Bounty, moſt juſtly condemned the negligent and diſdainful Wretch to a ſevere Puniſhment. A Puniſhment, You will obſerve, not for the *Commiſſion* of former Iniquities, but for the *Refuſal* of preſent Grace.

Ther. "The Refuſal of preſent Grace!" Is this the only Crime, with which You can ſuppoſe Him or me chargeable?

Aſp. Not the only, but it is the moſt provoking, and the moſt deſtructive Crime.

Ther. Is nothing then, nothing to be done on our Part?

Aſp. You are an Admirer of Nature, *Theron.* Read your favourite Book, or hear your favourite Author.

Nature is chriſtian, preaches to Mankind,
And bids dead Matter aid Us in our Creed.

Ther. Explain yourſelf, *Aſpaſio.* I ſhould be glad to find in the Volume of Nature, any Thing adapted to remove my Diſtreſs, and encourage my Hopes.

Aſp. When the ALMIGHTY made Man, and placed Him in this habitable World, did He ſay? "Here is a Dwelling-place, furniſh yourſelf "with Accommodations. Here are Materials; let "your own Skill form the Trees, the Fruits, the "Grain."

"Grain."—Or did He ſay? "Here they are, ready "formed to your Hand; only do ſomething, in or- "der to qualify Yourſelves for them, or entitle "Yourſelves to them."—No; his Language was; "They are fully prepared. You are welcome to "make Uſe of them all. They are my free Gift "to my needy Creatures."

In like Manner, when He ſent his SON into the World, to make the Atonement for Sin, and to work the juſtifying Righteouſneſs, He ſaid not to fallen Man; "Do your Part in this grand Buſi- "neſs. At leaſt make Yourſelf, in ſome Degree, "meet for theſe Benefits."—No; but He ſpoke, or rather now ſpeaks in the Goſpel, to this Effect. "The Work is all done; with a Perfection that is "abſolute, and admits of no Addition. The Be- "nefits are, not to diſtinguiſh Merit, but to reco- "ver the Ruined. Therefore, as ruined, unde- "ſerving, guilty Creatures, You are welcome to "apply and enjoy them all."

Ther. What! Is not Heavenly-mindedneſs to be exerciſed? No Victory over our Luſts gained? No Fruits of Sanctification produced?

Aſp. Theſe legal Apprehenſions! How cloſely they cleave to my *Theron*'s Mind! But I hope, the Word of GOD, which pierceth to the dividing aſunder the Soul and Spirit, will give the ſevering Blow.—And what ſays that ſacred Word? It deſcribes the Goſpel, as a *Will* or *Teſtament* *; and all

* *Heb.* ix. 16, 17. This Notion not only runs through the Scriptures, but ſtands conſpicuous even in their Title Page.—What are they called? THE OLD and THE NEW TESTAMENT.—What is a Teſtament? An authentic

all its glorious Bleſſings, as *Legacies* bequeathed by the dying *JESUS*.—When your old Acquaintance *Charicles*, left You a handſome Legacy; what did you *do*, to eſtabliſh your Title, and make it your own?

Ther. My Title was pre-eſtabliſhed, by my Friend's Donation. I had nothing to do, but to claim, to accept, and to poſſeſs.

Aſp. Do the very ſame, in the preſent Caſe. *CHRIST*, having merited Pardon, and obtained eternal Redemption, made his laſt Will, and recorded it in the New Teſtament. There He diſpoſes of thoſe unſearchable Riches. And who are his *Legatees?* Not the Holy or the Heavenly minded, but Sinners, loſt Sinners of Mankind. Under *this* Character, You are to claim, accept, and poſſeſs the great TESTATOR's Beneficence. —Sure you cannot ſuppoſe, that *CHRIST*'s Kindneſs is leſs ſincere, or that *CHRIST*'s Donations are leſs valid, than thoſe of an earthly Defunct.

Ther. This Illuſtration hardly reaches the Point. I ſpeak not of doing any Thing, under the Notion of *Merit*, but of *Qualification*. That which may, not entitle Us to *CHRIST*, but only prepare our Way to Him.

Aſp.

thentic Deed, in which Eſtates are tranſmitted, and Legacies bequeathed. In other Teſtaments, ſome *earthly* Poſſeſſion; in this, the *heavenly* Patrimony, even all the Riches of Grace, and the everlaſting Inheritance of Glory. Did we conſider the Scriptures in this Light, it would be a moſt engaging Invitation, to ſearch them with Aſſiduity and Pleaſure. What Child is willing to continue ignorant of a deceaſed Parent's laſt Will and Teſtament? Who does not covet to know, what Honours, Hereditaments, and Wealth devolve to his Enjoyment, by ſuch an intereſting and venerable Conveyance?

Aſp. By ſuch Notions, inſtead of preparing your Way to *CHRIST*, You fill it with Stumbling-blocks, Precipices, and deep Pits.—As to Qualification, if there be any ſuch Thing, it is our extreme Indigence; and this, I preſume, you are not without. Other Qualification, neither Reaſon preſcribes, nor Scripture requires.

Reaſon preſcribes no other.—The Gifts of the eternal SOVEREIGN are intended, not to recognize our imaginary Worth, but to aggrandize our Ideas of his immenſe Liberality. They are intended to ſhew forth the exceeding Riches of his Goodneſs; which pardons and ſaves, not only without Merit, but againſt Demerit. To anſwer *ſuch* a Deſign, the Unworthy and the Sinners are duly qualified; nay, are the *only* qualified Perſons.

Scripture requires no other.—The ever-merciful SAVIOUR ſays not; They are unqualified for my Salvation. They have no valuable or noble Acquirements. But this is his tender Complaint; *They will not come to me*, juſt as they are; with all their Sins about them; with all their Guilt upon them; *that they may have Life* *.

Pray, take Notice of this Text; and you will ſee Things placed in a new Light. You will behold *CHRIST* under a new Character, and his Benefits ranged in a new Order. Sanctification, Heavenly-mindedneſs, and a Victory over our Luſts, are not the Qualities which He *requires*, but the Bleſſings which He *confers*. Not what We bring to Him, as introductory Conditions; but what We receive from Him, as the Fruit of his Sufferings, and the Effect of his Grace.

Ther.

* John v. 40.

Ther. "The Unworthy and Sinners, the *only* "*qualified!*" Of this Expreſſion I cannot but take particular Notice.—Then *Judas* ſhould ſtand in the firſt Rank of qualified Perſons! While the devout Centurion, *whoſe Prayers and Alms came up as a Memorial before GOD*, muſt thereby be unqualified for the Favour of Heaven.

Aſp. If you obſerved my Expreſſion, I ſpoke in the hypothetical Manner*. Made a Suppoſition, rather than advanced an Aſſertion. *If* there be any Qualification, this is the only one. But ſtrictly ſpeaking, there is no ſuch Thing. The impulſive or inclining Cauſe of all GOD's Favour ſhewn, of all GOD's Goodneſs exerciſed, is—from the Creature? No; but from *Himſelf*, Himſelf *alone*. *He has Mercy*, not becauſe this or that Perſon is amiable, is meet, or qualified, but *becauſe he will have Mercy*.—As for our Need of Mercy and Reconciliation, ariſing from a State of Sinfulneſs, this can no more conſtitue a *real* Qualification for the Bleſſings, than an Act of Rebellion can qualify for the firſt Honours of the State.

But this We muſt allow; That ſuch Need, ſuch Miſery, ſuch Sinfulneſs, illuſtrate the *Freeneſs*, and manifeſt the *Riches* of Grace. This alſo We ſhould never forget, that GOD's firſt and leading Purpoſe,

* If the Reader ſhould think, that *Theron*'s Objection is not fully anſwered, the Deficiency may, in this Manner, be ſupplied.—*Judas* was ſufficiently qualified, as a *loſt* Sinner; but He refuſed the Grace, through Diſtruſt and Deſpair. *Cornelius*, inſtead of being unqualified for, was an actual Partaker of divine Grace. Which inclined Him to offer up Sacrifices of *Acknowledgment*, after He had relied on the only Sacrifice of *Atonement*. See Vol. I. page 285.

poſe, in all his favourable Diſpenſations to fallen Man, is, to demonſtrate the Sovereignty, and diſplay the Glory of his Grace.—The LORD, promiſing a very extraordinary Deliverance to *Iſrael*; promiſing all the Bleſſings of the new Covenant, ſays; *not for your Sakes, be it known unto You, do I this* * ſignal Act of Kindneſs.—For Ye have diſobeyed me in your own Land, and diſhonoured me among the Heathen.—What then is the Inducement? We find it in the following Declaration; *I, even I am HE, that blotteth out your Tranſgreſſions for my own Sake* †. Becauſe, I am unſpeakably kind. Becauſe, I delight in Loving-kindneſs, and have Pleaſure in the Salvation of Sinners.—What is the End of all? It is FOR THE PRAISE OF THE GLORY OF HIS GRACE ‡. A proper Motto for all the Diſplays of divine Benevolence to ſinful Creatures. Eſpecially, for the Gift of a perfect and everlaſting Righteouſneſs. Which is, to Man the Bleſſing of Bleſſings; and to GOD, the Glory of Glories.

Ther. This is a Gift indeed!—To be intereſted in all the Merits of *CHRIST!* To have his immaculate Righteouſneſs imputed to my Soul!—So that from henceforth there ſhall be no Fear of Condemnation, but a comfortable Enjoyment of freeſt Love, and a delightful Expectation of completeſt Glory!

Aſp. Admirably ſpoken! Of all theſe Bleſſings *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs is truly meritorious, and certainly productive. And why ſhould You not, by receiving the latter, enjoy the former? Why ſhould Diffidence, like a malignant Spectre, haunt

* Ezek. xxxvi. 32. † Iſai. xliii. 25. ‡ Eph. i. 6.

haunt your Thoughts; thwart your Paths; and hold back or unnerve your Hand?

If this rich Donation, ſurpaſs your very Thoughts, and fill You with grateful Aſtoniſhment; it is ſo much the better adapted to exemplify, what the Scripture very emphatically ſtyles, the *abundant*, the *ſuperabundant*, the *exceeding abundant* * Grace of our GOD.—GOD is a boundleſs Ocean of Love; ever flowing, yet abſolutely inexhauſtible. See! What an innumerable Variety of Benefits, are tranſmitted from yonder Sun, to gladden all the Regions of Nature! Yet the Sun is but a *Spark*; its higheſt Splendor, no more than a *Shade*; its uninterrupted and moſt profuſe Communications of Light, a poor diminutive *Scantling*; compared with the Riches of Divine *Benignity*.

The Servant in the Parable, who owed ten thouſand Talents †, craved only ſome merciful Forbearance. Whereas, his generous Lord remitted the whole Sum, and gave him an Acquitance in full; *I forgave Thee all that Debt* ‡.—You wonder, and very deſervedly, at ſuch vaſt Generoſity. But, what had been your Admiration, if You had ſeen the noble Maſter admitting this obnoxious Slave, to

* Υπερεπλεσα χαρις. 2 Cor. ix. 14.—Υπερπερισσευσεν η χαρις. Rom. v. 20.—Υπερεπλεονασεν η χαρις. 2 Tim. i. 14.

† If theſe were Talents of Gold, the Sum would amount to *Seventy-two Millions* Sterling. If only Talents of Silver, the Debt would have been *four Millions, four hundred thouſand* Pounds. Hereby our LORD moſt ſignificantly intimates the vaſt Number, and the enormous Magnitude, of our Offences againſt GOD; together with our utter Incapacity, of making any Satisfaction; and his moſt magnificent Grace, in freely forgiving all.

‡ Matt. xviii. 32.

to a Share in his Dignity? What, if he had made ſo worthleſs a Wretch, the Child of his Family, and the Heir of his Eſtate? This, You are ready to ſay, would exceed the Bounds of Credibility. Yet GOD Almighty's ſtupendous Beneficence exceeds all this. He not only ſpares guilty Creatures, but makes them his *Children*; makes them *Inheritors* of his Kingdom; and, as an Introduction to all, or rather as the Crown of all, makes them *Partakers* * of his SON.

Ther. The Gift is ineſtimable; of more Value than all Worlds. It will render me bleſſed and happy, Now and for Ever.

Aſp. Then it is perfectly agreeable to *the glorious Goſpel of the bleſſed GOD.* Hear, what the firſt Writer † in the Chriſtian Church ſays, upon this charming Subject.—"The Goſpel comprehends, a "Diſcharge from Puniſhment; a Remiſſion of "Sins; the Gift of Righteouſneſs; the Endowment of Sanctification; Redemption from every "Evil; the Adoption of Sons; the Inheritance "of Heaven; and a moſt endeared, a conjugal "Relation to the infinitely majeſtic SON of "GOD. All theſe divinely precious Privileges "preached, preſented, vouchſafed, to the Fooliſh, to the Diſobedient, to Enemies."

* Heb. iii. 14.

† *St. Chryſoſtom*, deſcribing the Office of a Preacher or Evangeliſt, thus expreſſes Himſelf. *Και γαρ κολασεως απαλλαγην, και αμαρτηματων λυσιν, και δικαιοσυνην, και αγιασμον, και απολαυσεις, και υιοθεσιαν, και κληρονομιαν των αγαθων, και συγγενειαν προς τον υιον του Θεου πασιν ημιν απαγγελλων, τοις εχθροις, τοις απειθουσι, τοις εν σκοτω καθημενοις.* Vol. II. pag. 2. Edit. Savil.

Ther. May ſuch unworthy Perſons look for Bleſſings, ſo ſuperlatively excellent?

Aſp. Unworthy!—My dear Friend, dwell no longer on that obſolete Topic. Remember the poor ragged Creatures, that ſat ſhivering and ſtarved under the Hedges. Were *they* worthy to receive an Invitation, *they* worthy to be allowed Admiſſion, to a magnificent Court and a royal Banquet?

Aſſure Yourſelf, the greateſt Unworthineſs is no Objection in GOD's Account. Since He never looks at any Thing *amiable* in the Creature, that may engage Him to ſhew Mercy; nor yet at any Thing *abominable* in the Creature, that may with-hold Him from ſhewing Mercy. Not for your Sake, but *for my own Sake*, is his invariable Decree.

With regard to Worthineſs, this is as much diſavowed by the Goſpel, as *equivocal* * Generation is exploded by the modern Philoſophy. The Goſpel being a gracious Proviſion, made, by the ſupreme royal Prerogative, for the Relief of the *Ruined*, and the Salvation of the *Ungodly*.

Nay; this Notion of yours is diametrically *contrary* to the Goſpel, and totally *ſubverſive* of the Covenant of Grace.

Ther. In what Reſpect?

Aſp.

* The *Ancients* imagined, that many Vegetables and Inſects were produced by, I know not what, plaſtic Power in the Sun and other Elements. This is called *equivocal* Generation.—Whereas, the *modern* Philoſophers maintain, that every Individual of this Kind, derives its Being from ſome Parent-Vegetable or Parent-Animal. This is ſtyled *univocal* Generation.—The former Opinion is now univerſally rejected, as irrational, chimerical, and to the laſt Degree unphiloſophical.

Asp. Becauſe it would make our own Duty and Obedience the Terms. Whereas, the Terms were *CHRIST*'s Suffering, and *CHRIST*'s Obedience. *Theſe* are the Hinge on which that great Tranſaction turns, and on which the Hope of the World hangs.

Ther. Be more particular, *Aſpaſio*.

Aſp. The firſt Covenant was made with *Adam*, for Himſelf and for Us. Breaking it, He loſt his original Righteouſneſs, and became ſubject to Death. Became at once a *Bankrupt* and a *Rebel*. In this Guilt, in this Miſery, We and all his Poſterity ſhared.—Now you cannot ſuppoſe, that the Almighty MAJESTY would enter into a freſh Covenant, with an *inſolvent* and *attainted* Creature. It pleaſed, therefore, the SECOND PERSON of the adorable TRINITY, to undertake our Cauſe; to become our Surety; and put Himſelf in our Stead. *With Him* the ſecond Covenant was made. He was charged with the Performance of the Conditions; thereby to obtain Pardon and Righteouſneſs, Grace and Glory, for all his People. *I have made a Covenant*, ſays the LORD JEHOVAH, not with fallen *Adam*, or any of his guilty Race, *but with my CHOSEN ONE**. And the Terms were (You will permit

* *Pſal.* lxxxix. 3. It is generally allowed, that this Pſalm, in its *ſublimeſt* Senſe, is referable to *CHRIST*; and, in its *full* Extent, is referable *only* unto *CHRIST*. If ſo, I think, it would be more ſignificant and emphatical, to render בחירי *My CHOSEN ONE*.—This will furniſh out a very clear and cogent Argument to prove, that the Covenant of Grace was made, not with Us, our Anceſtors or Succeſſors, but with the *LORD JESUS*

me to repeat the momentous Truth) not your Worthineſs or mine, but the Incarnation, the Obedience, the Death of GOD's ever-bleſſed SON.

Ther. Has Man then no Office aſſigned, no Part to act, in the Covenant of Grace?

Aſp. He has: but it is a Part, which my Friend ſeems very loth to diſcharge. His Part is to *accept* the Bleſſings, fully purchaſed by the SAVIOUR, and freely preſented to the Sinner. His Part is, not to diſhonour the REDEEMER's gracious Interpoſition, and infinitely ſufficient Performance, by pretending to any Merit of his own. His Part (why will You conſtrain me to reiterate in this Manner?) is, not to bring Money in his Hand, with the ten Brethren; but, with an empty Hand, and like an impoveriſhed *Lazarus*, *to take hold of GOD's Covenant* *.

Ther. If this be the Nature of the New Covenant, I muſt confeſs, that I have hitherto been ignorant of it, and of the Goſpel.

Aſp. And from hence ariſes your preſent Diſtreſs. To this, not to your Unworthineſs, but to *this* I aſcribe your Perplexity and Anguiſh.—You are a Philoſopher, *Theron*; and have been accuſtomed to examine the Proportion of Objects, rather than to

JESUS CHRIST in our Name. Juſt ſuch an Argument as the Apoſtle uſes, to convince the *Galatians*, That the Promiſes of the Covenant were made to the ſame Divine PERSON, *Gal.* iii. 16.—From both which Premiſes this important Concluſion follows; That Juſtification and every ſpiritual Bleſſing are the Fruit of *CHRIST*'s Obedience; are lodged in Him as the great *Proprietary*; are *communicated* to Sinners, only through *Faith*, or in a Way of Believing. See *Zech.* ix. 11.

* Iſai. lvi. 4.

to weigh them in the Balance of the Sanctuary. Here, you find ſuch Accounts of divine Grace, and ſuch Diſtributions of divine Favour, as break through and ſuperſede all the Rules of Equity and Proportion, maintained among Men. This quite overthrows your Concluſions, drawn from the *Fitneſs* of Things.—Overthrows, did I ſay? Let me correct myſelf. Is it not fit, highly fit, that We ſhould, however unworthy in Ourſelves, magnify the Grace of our GOD?

Ther. Moſt certainly.

Aſp. How can this be done, but by expecting great and ſuperlatively precious Bleſſings from his Hand?—*Alexander*, You know, had a famous, but indigent Philoſopher, in his Court. Our Adept in Science, was once particularly ſtraitened in his Circumſtances. To whom ſhould He apply, but to his Patron, the Conqueror of the World? His Requeſt was no ſooner made, than granted. *Alexander* gave Him a Commiſſion, to receive of his Treaſurer whatever He wanted. He immediately demands, in his Sovereign's Name, ten thouſand Pounds.—The Treaſurer, ſurpriſed at ſo large a Demand, refuſes to comply: but waits upon the King, and repreſents the Affair. Adding withal, how unreaſonable He thought the Petition, and how exorbitant the Sum.—*Alexander* heard Him with Patience. But, as ſoon as He had ended his Remonſtrance, replied; "Let the Money be "inſtantly paid. I am delighted with this Philo-"ſopher's way of thinking. He has done me a "ſingular Honour. By the Largeneſs of his Re-"queſt, He ſhews the high Idea He has con-

" ceived, both of my ſuperior Wealth, and my " royal Munificence."

Thus, my dear *Theron*, let Us honour, what the inſpired Penman ſtyles, *The marvelous Loving-kindneſs of JEHOVAH.* From the King, *whoſe Name is the LORD of Hoſts*, let Us expect—I ſay not, what correſponds with our low Models of Generoſity—I ſay not, what We ſuppoſe proportioned to our fanſied Deſerts—but what is ſuitable to the unknown Magnificence of his Name, and the unbounded Benevolence of his Heart. Let Us expect ſuch divinely rich Bleſſings, as ſurpaſs all created Power, and all human Apprehenſion. Then We ſhall no longer be afraid, aſſuredly to truſt that gracious Declaration, *JESUS CHRIST* is *made of GOD unto Us Wiſdom, and Righteouſneſs, and Sanctification, and Redemption. JESUS CHRIST hath* given Himſelf for Us, and *does* give Himſelf to Us; together with all the Bleſſings of his Purchaſe, from the Pardon of our daily Infirmities, even to eternal Life in Glory.

Ther. Yes; upon Condition, that We fight the good Fight, and finiſh our Courſe of Duty. *Henceforth*, ſays the Apoſtle; after this is done, *there is laid up for me*, and for other victorious Soldiers, for other faithful Labourers, *a Crown of Righteouſneſs.*

Aſp. But is it vouchſafed, on account of their ſucceſsful Warfare, or perſevering Obedience? If ſo, *Iſrael may vaunt themſelves, and ſay*; *Mine own Hand*, not the REDEEMER's Interpoſition, *hath ſaved me* *.

Not to repeat what has already been alledged, in Oppoſition to this Opinion—Not to produce what might

* Judg. vii. 8.

might farther be urged, from a Variety of ſcriptural Teſtimonies—I ſhall only deſire You to obſerve, what the Apoſtle Himſelf adds in this very Place. *There is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs:* but is this the Pay, proportionate or owing to his own Services? Is it what He claims and demands, on the Foot of Duty performed?—The very Title of the Reward implies the contrary. It is *a Crown of Righteouſneſs*, becauſe purchaſed by the meritorious and conſummate Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*.—The Action of the Judge declares the contrary: *which the LORD, the righteous Judge, ſhall* give *me at that Day*. It is, You ſee, *a Gift*; an Act of Favour; the Iſſue of unmerited Bounty; what neither Saint, nor Martyr, nor Apoſtle enjoys, but only by way of gracious Donation *.

You have been complaining of your Guilt. Why will You increaſe and aggravate it? Why will You add Robbery to all your other Tranſgreſſions?

Ther. Robbery!

Aſp. Yes, *Theron*. By all this Backwardneſs to receive *CHRIST* and his Benefits, You are really robbing GOD; robbing Him of the brighteſt Jewel in his Crown; the Honour of—his free Grace—his rich Mercy—his matchleſs, incomprehenſible, heavenly Bounty.

* 2 *Tim.* iv. 8. The Word ἀποδοσις, as it ſtands in the preſent Connection, is, I think, very properly explained by a late pious Profeſſor of Divinity at *Glaſgow*: *Profitetur Fiduciam ſuam de gratuita Mercede, quam DEUS gratis promiſit omnibus Fidelibus, & ut juſtus Judex, juſte ſimul & ex Gratia rependet, non ex Merito ullo noſtro, ſed priora Dona ſua gratuita poſterioribus gratuitò cumulando.* DICSONI *Expoſ. Analyt.*

Ther. Ah! My *Aſpaſio!* You don't know my State. You cannot conceive my Guilt *. I was, by Nature, a Child of Wrath. I have been, by Practice, a Slave of Sin. What is worſe, I am ſtill corrupt; have ſtill a carnal Heart.—And has not ſuch a Wretch forfeited all Title to the Divine Favour? Nay, does not ſuch a Wretch deſerve the Vengeance of eternal Fire?

Aſp. That We all deſerve this Miſery, is certain beyond Diſpute. I am glad, that We are ſenſible of our horrible Vileneſs. Now We are to believe, that the *LORD JESUS* has ſatisfied Divine Juſtice; has paid an immenſely glorious Price, on purpoſe to obtain for ſuch damnable Wretches, both the Manifeſtation, and all the Fruits, of the divine Good-Will. According to the Import of that charming Scripture, *When We were Enemies* (and what is there in an Enemy, to beſpeak

* I believe, No One *experienced* in the ſpiritual Life will ſuſpect, that *Theron* ſpeaks *out of Character*.—Conſcience, when once alarmed, is a ſtubborn and unceremonious Thing. It pays no Deference to Wealth: it never ſtands in Awe of Grandeur: neither can it be ſoothed by the Refinements of Education, nor pacified by the Attainments of Learning. And We generally find, that a moſt unaccountable Propenſity to *Self-worthineſs*, ſtrongly poſſeſſes the newly-awakened Sinner. He is perpetually raiſing Objections, founded on the Want of perſonal Merit; notwithſtanding all our Remonſtrances, to quiet his Fears, and remove his Jealouſies. It is indeed a hard Taſk, for a Mind, naturally leavened with legal Pride, to come naked and miſerable to *CHRIST*—to come, diveſted of every Recommendation, but that of extreme Wretchedneſs; and receive, from the Hand of unmerited Benignity, the free Riches of evangelical Grace.

beſpeak Favour, or deſerve Benefits?) *We were reconciled to* GOD *by the Death of his* SON*.

You have *great Guilt*.—But is this a Reaſon, why You ſhould be prohibited the Bleſſings of the Covenant? Contemplate the State of that forlorn and wretched Outcaſt, deſcribed in the ſixteenth of *Ezekiel*. An Infant *in its Blood*: this repreſents a Sinner, who has nothing to excite Love, but all that may provoke Abhorrence. Hear what the HOLY ONE of *Iſrael* ſays, concerning ſuch an One. *When I ſaw Thee*, waſhed, and purified, and made meet for my Acceptance? No; but when I ſaw Thee *polluted in thy Blood*†; loathſome with Defilement, and laden with Iniquity. Then, even then *I ſaid unto Thee, Live: I ſpread my Skirt over Thee; and Thou becameſt mine*. Can You think of any Reaſon, why ſuch a ſordid Object ſhould be cheriſhed and careſſed, but Mercy alone; mere Mercy, properly ſo called? Yet this is the Manner of GOD's Proceeding, not barely with one People, but with Sinners of every Denomination; not in one Period of Time only, but through all Ages and all Generations.

You are *ſtill corrupt*.—What then? Does this hinder You from being relieved by the SAVIOUR's Righteouſneſs? Does it not rather prove You to be one of thoſe, whom He came to ſeek and

* Rom. v. 10.

† The Words are peculiarly emphatical; not only doubled, but redoubled. To denote, at once, the *Strangeneſs* of the Fact, yet the *Certainty* of the Favour. *When I paſſed by thee, and ſaw thee polluted* in thine own Blood, *I ſaid unto thee when thou waſt* in thy Blood, *Live: Yea, I ſaid unto thee when thou waſt* in thy Blood, *Live*. Ezek. xvi. 6.

and to ſave?—You are a Governor of the County-hoſpital, *Theron*. You have been induſtrious in promoting, and are active in ſupporting, that excellent Inſtitution; where Medicine with her healing Stores, and Religion with her heavenly Hopes, act as joint Handmaids to Charity. What are the Circumſtances, which render any Perſons the proper Objects, for an Admiſſion into your Infirmary?

Ther. Their Poverty, and their Diſtemper. Without *Poverty*, they would not need; and free from *Diſtemper*, they would not prize, the Benefit of our modern *Bethesda*.

Aſp. Apply this to the Caſe under Conſideration. The whole World is in a State of ſpiritual Diſorder. *CHRIST* is ſtyled, by the inſpired Writer, *The LORD our Healer* *. The Gift of his Righteouſneſs, the Balm of his Blood, and the Influences of his SPIRIT, are the ſovereign Reſtorative. And ſure it cannot be a fanſiful Perſuaſion of our Health, but the real Miſery of our Diſeaſe, which renders Us proper Objects of his recovering Grace.—*He came, not to call the Righteous, but Sinners* †. *To* give them *Repentance*, and Newneſs of Life;

* Exod. xv. 26.

† *I came, not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.* Matt. ix. 13. Many Perſons, I am apt to ſuſpect, miſtake the Meaning of this ſweet Paſſage; and turn the *freely flowing* Benefits of the Goſpel, into the *rigorous* Requirements of the Law.

They reckon, our LORD's Calling to Repentance, is like a School-maſter calling the Youths to their Taſk, or like a Houſholder calling his Servants to their Work. Whereas, it is like *Joſeph*, the Governor of *Egypt*, calling his Brethren, each to receive a Suit of Apparel, and all to partake of his hoſpitable Banquet.

Life; which He effects, by giving Himself to them, as their whole Salvation.

Ther. But, if any foolish and refractory Patients have abused our Beneficence; it is a standing unalterable Rule of the House, never to admit them a second Time; however pressing their Exigencies, or however powerful their Recommender. I have, not once only, but through the whole Course of my Life, abused the marvelous Loving-kindness of the LORD.

Asp. And is not the LORD superior to all his Creatures, in Acts of *Pardon*, as well as of *Power*? Yes; as those Heavens are higher, than this prostrate Earth; so much more inlarged and extensive is the divine Clemency—than the widest Sphere of human Kindness, shall I say? Rather than the boldest Flights of human Imagination.

Since Adam *fell, no Mortal, uninspir'd,*
Has ever yet conceiv'd, or ever shall,
How kind is GOD *.

Your Statutes are inexorable, in case of one notorious Irregularity committed. *But the free Gift* of a REDEEMER's Righteousness is vouchsafed, notwithstanding *many Offences, unto Justification* †. It is the Glory of our Almighty RULER, and redounds to the Honour of his crucified SON, to pass over ‡ not a single Transgression only, but a Multitude

CHRIST, as a SAVIOUR, is the greatest of Benefactors. When, therefore, He calls to Repentance, his Intention is, not to demand, but to bestow; not to enjoin, but to impart. *HE is exalted*, says the Apostle, *to* give *Repentance*. Acts v. 31.

* Night Thoughts. † Rom. v. 16. ‡ Prov. xix. 11.

Multitude of Provocations; to be altogether as unequaled in Mercy, as HE is absolutely supreme in Majesty.

As it is the *grossest Pride*, to entertain high Notions of our own Accomplishments, or to expect eternal Life on the Score of our own Obedience; so it will be the *greatest Affront* to the Grandeur of *CHRIST*'s Merits, and the Freeness of his Grace, if we suppose our Crimes too heinous to be forgiven, or our Persons too vile to be accepted.

Ther. I have often thought; If I was as holy and righteous, as some Persons, whom I know; if I had such Dominion over my evil Affections, and brought forth such Fruits of Righteousness, as I have observed in some Christians; I could then confidently believe.

Asp. Then you would lay your own Holiness and Righteousness, as a Foundation for your Faith; not the infinitely tender Mercies, and the unalterably sure Promises of the LORD. In this Case, You would act like the Mason, who purposes to dig his Materials from a Cloud of Smoke, not from the Stones of the Quarry.

Besides; this Method would not only miscarry, but contradict the Design of *CHRIST*'s Coming. He came to *save Sinners*, and to *justify the Ungodly*. According to your Notion, He must come to save the Righteous, and to justify the Godly. He must be a Physician, not to the Diseased, but to the Healthy; and his Blood must cleanse, not the Defiled, but the Pure.

Whatever my Friend may have thought, I will not scruple to affirm; That, if He was indeed a righteous and godly Person, the *LORD JESUS*,

as a SAVIOUR, would have nothing to do with him. But, being a ſinful and ungodly Man, I will venture to add, what the People ſaid to blind *Bartimeus*; *Be of good Comfort, He calleth Thee.* Calleth thee, that Thou mayeſt be juſtified, ſanctified, ſaved. Therefore, *come boldly* to HIM, rely chearfully on Him, that You may *obtain* this great *Mercy*, and ſhare this rich Grace.

Theron pauſed.—Theſe Conſiderations ſeemed to operate: This Anodyne to take effect.—Deſirous to improve the favourable Juncture, and impart more ſtrong Conſolation, *Aſpaſio* added.

How often did the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem* diſregard the Warnings, and reject the Counſels of our Bleſſed LORD! How juſtly might HE have ſworn in his Wrath; "They ſhall never hear the "joyful Sound of my Goſpel more. The Bleſſings, "which they have ſo wantonly deſpiſed, and ſo "wickedly abuſed, ſhall be irrevocably withdrawn." —Inſtead of paſſing ſuch a Sentence, this is the Charge, which, after his Reſurrection, He gives to his Apoſtles: *Let Repentance and Remiſſion of Sins be preached, in my Name, to all Nations,* BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM*.—"At *Jeruſalem*, LORD! "Have not the Men of that ungrateful and barba"rous City been deaf to thy tendereſt Importunities? "Did they not perſecute Thee unto Condemnation "and Death? Are not their Weapons ſtill reeking, "as it were, with thy Blood; and their Tongues "ſtill ſhooting out Arrows, even bitter Words? By "which they would murder thy Character, as they "have already crucified thy Perſon."—Yet theſe Wretches (and could any be more inhuman? Could any

* Luke xxiv. 47.

any be more unworthy!) are not only not abhorred, but unto them is the Meſſage of Grace, and the Word of Salvation ſent. Nay, to ſhew the unparalleled Freeneſs of our REDEEMER's Grace, Theſe are *firſt* upon the heavenly Liſt. The glad Tidings of Pardon and Life, which are to be publiſhed through the World, *muſt begin* (amazing Mercy!) MUST BEGIN at *Jeruſalem.*

Ther. Thus much I may venture to profeſs in my own Behalf: That I long for this Bleſſing—I pray for this Bleſſing—But I cannot ſee my Title, to this comprehenſive and ineſtimable Bleſſing, *clear.*

Aſp. I behold it perfectly clear. Not becauſe You long for it, and pray for it. But becauſe *CHRIST* and his Righteouſneſs are *granted* * unto You, in the ſure irrevocable Record of the Goſpel.

Ther.

* By this Grant, We have a Title to *CHRIST*; yes, ſays Mr. *Boſton*, by Virtue of this Grant, "*CHRIST* "is ours, even before We believe. Not that We have a "*ſaving Intereſt* in Him, or are in a State of Grace: but "that We have a *common Intereſt* in Him, and the com-"mon Salvation; which fallen Angels have not. So "that it is lawful and warrantable for Us, not for them, "to take Poſſeſſion of *CHRIST* and his Salvation."—See Mr. BOSTON's Notes upon a Book, entitled *The Marrow of modern Divinity.*

A Book, deſigned to guard equally againſt *antinomian* Licentiouſneſs, and *legal* Bondage. The Thoughts are juſt and ſtriking; the Arguments ſolid and convincing. The Diction is familiar, yet perſpicuous; and the Doctrine exceedingly comfortable, becauſe truly evangelical. —The *Notes* are, I think, a Maſter-piece of candid and judicious Criticiſm. In which the nice Diſcernment of the Logician, ſifts, diſtinguiſhes, and adjuſts the rich Furniture of the Divine.—Perhaps, I may venture to ſay, that this little Treatiſe pours as much Light upon the Goſpel

Ther. Can you mention a Paſſage, in which theſe precious Bleſſings are granted?

Aſp. Eaſily and readily. *If any Man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink.*—Some Days ago, a worthy Clergyman, who lately came to ſettle in the Neighbourhood, did Himſelf the Honour of making one at your Table. After Dinner, You ſhewed Him your Library; We took a Walk in your Garden; and made the agreeable Tour of the Fiſh-ponds. Then—with that amiable Frankneſs of Mien and Accent, which is ſo peculiar to my Friend, and endears all his Favours—You told Him; "That "He was as welcome to any Book in your Study, "as if the whole Collection was his own. That "if, on a Viſit from ſome Acquaintance of ſuperi-"or Rank, He ſhould wiſh to be accommodated "with a more delicate Entertainment than uſual; "the Productions of your Waters, and of your "Hot-beds, were intirely at his Service. And that "his Acceptance of your Offers, without the leaſt "Shyneſs or Reſerve, would be the moſt pleaſing "Compliment, He could pay You on the Occa-"ſion."

Ther. Why do You leave the ſacred Text? Why deſiſt from opening the Treaſures of Scripture; only to gild a Potſherd, and make Earth and Aſhes vain?

Aſp. Not to make *Theron* vain, but to make Him aſhamed of his Diſtruſt. In the Manner of doing this, I follow the Example of my unerring MASTER. He deduces his Argument for Faith in the

Goſpel and Grace of *CHRIST*; and, together with the Notes, affords as many important Diſtinctions in Divinity, as any Book of its Size whatever.

the everlasting FATHER, from the Sensations which earthly Parents feel towards their Children. He appeals even to the Experience of *bad* Men, and to the Yearnings of *their own* Bowels, for a Vindication and Display of the divine Compassion. *If Ye then, being evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your heavenly FATHER give good Things, to Them that ask Him* *? But We return to the Application of our Text.

Thus said my Friend. And what says the PROPRIETOR of all Good?—*If any Man*, however unworthy his Person, or obnoxious his Character, *thirst*.—Thirst for something, to make Him truly happy. Saying, with them of old Time, "Who will shew Us any Good?"—*Let Him come unto ME*, the Fountain of living Waters; *and* not only taste, or sip, but *drink* his Fill.—Though He has hitherto been hewing to himself *broken* Cisterns, and labouring for that, which satisfieth not. Nay; though He has frequented the *polluted* Stream, and not only beguiled Himself with Vanity, but defiled Himself with Iniquity. Yet let Him turn to Me, and He shall neither meet with a Repulse, nor find his Wishes mocked. He shall obtain substantial Satisfaction; even the Forgiveness of his Sins, the true Righteousness, and everlasting Life †.—Since then the Invitation is so absolutely free, what have You to do, but, without Scruple or Doubtfulness, to drink? To receive the Promise as your Portion, and to look upon the Blessings as your own?

That

* Matt. vii. 11.

† Nothing less than these Blessings, can be meant by the *Drink* which CHRIST gives: as nothing less than these, can satiate the weary Soul.

That Clergyman has not the leaſt Suſpicion of being diſappointed, in caſe He ſhould ſend for a Brace of Carp from your Canal, or a fine Melon from your Garden.—Why is He ſo confident? Becauſe He has done You any ſignal Service? No; but becauſe You have paſſed your Word, and made the generous Offer.—And why ſhould You harbour the leaſt Doubt concerning the Divine Veracity? Why ſhould You call in queſtion your Right to theſe heavenly Treaſures? Since it is founded on a Grant, altogether as *free*, altogether as *clear*, as your own indulgent Conceſſion; and infinitely more *firm*, than any human Engagement. Founded on the Fidelity of that ſublime BEING, who "remembers his Covenant and Promiſe to a thouſand "Generations."

Ther. It is impoſſible to confute, yet difficult to believe, what You urge.

Aſp. What I urge, is not the Voice of a few dubious Paſſages, nicely culled from the Book of GOD, or forcibly wreſted by the Interpretion of Man. The whole Tenour of Inſpiration runs, with the greateſt Perſpicuity, and the greateſt Uniformity, in this delightful Strain.—Let me, out of a Multitude, produce another Expreſs from the Court of Heaven. *Ho! every One that thirſteth, come Ye to the Waters, even He that hath no Money. Come Ye, buy and eat: yea; come, buy Wine and Milk, without Money and without Price* *.—*Wine* and *Milk*, ſignify the Juſtification of our Perſons; our Sanctification thereby; and the Hope of eternal Glory. Theſe are nouriſhing and refreſhing to the Soul, as Milk the richeſt of Foods, and as Wine the beſt of

* Iſai. lv. 1.

Cordials, are to the Body.—Theſe, You ſee, are *to* be received and enjoyed, *without Money*, and *without Price*. Without any Merit of our own; without any Plea deduced from Ourſelves; by poor, undone, periſhing Bankrupts.—They are thus free for *every One*. No Exception is made. No excluſive Clauſe added. It is not ſaid, Any One that is *worthy*; but Every One, that *thirſteth*.—And this is mentioned, not as a Qualification entitling; but as connecting the Invitation with thoſe Circumſtances*, which muſt make it more eminently gracious, and more

* *Thoſe Circumſtances*—that is, the Unhappineſs and Miſery occaſioned by Sin; which, and not any gracious Habits, are ſet forth under the Notion of *thirſting*. This Thirſt all Men are labouring to quench; ſome one Way, ſome another. The Goſpel points out the *only* Way of doing it effectually, and invites Us to make Uſe of the happy Expedient.

Every One that thirſteth; "thirſteth for the Grace of "GOD, and for the Bleſſings of the Goſpel," ſays Mr. *Poole*. Whoſe *Annotations*, though on critical Points accurate; on hiſtorical Subjects perſpicuous; are not always, on doctrinal Heads, ſo truly evangelical, as might be wiſhed.—"This Thirſt, He adds, implieth a "vehement, and active Deſire of Grace." Does not ſuch an Expoſition place the greateſt Part of Minkind, yea even of the viſible Church, quite beyond the Compaſs of this gracious Invitation?—But to our unſpeakable Comfort, the following Verſe decides the Queſtion, againſt the celebrated Commentator, and in Favour of the miſerable Sinner. The *thirſty* are thoſe, who *ſpend their Money for that which is not Bread, and their Labour for that which ſatisfieth not*. Which is the Caſe with unreaſonable, fooliſh, wicked Men. Theſe therefore are invited. Whereas, they who thirſt for Grace; whoſe Thirſt is vehement and active; they are not ſpending their Money at this unprofitable Rate. On the contrary; they are labouring for that, which is ſubſtantial Bread, and, of all Things in the World, moſt ſatisfying.

more particularly intereſting.—To leave no Room for any miſgiving Apprehenſions, the kind Invitation is repeated; *buy and eat*; *buy Wine and Milk.* The invaluable yet free Tender, is confirmed again and again; *He that hath no Money*; *without Money*; *without Price.* And both are preſſed upon Us with a very remarkable Ardour, with the moſt affectionate Vehemence; *Come Ye*; *come Ye*; *yea, come.*

Had our heavenly BENEFACTOR permited Us to draw up this Inſtrument of Conveyance, and word it according to our own Wiſh; what Language could We have contrived, to render either the Grant more free, or our Claim more ſecure?

Ther. Theſe are chearing Truths; and as cogent, as chearing. They amount to little leſs than a Demonſtration. Methinks, I am ready to profeſs, in the Language of *Agrippa*; *Almoſt Thou perſuadeſt me*, to truſt and not be afraid.

Aſp. If I have *almoſt* perſuaded, my GOD will *altogether* perſuade. This is the Work of his bleſſed SPIRIT. Which he accompliſhes, by ſuch gracious Words, and ſuch encouraging Words, as thoſe We have been quoting.—And can You diſtruſt the Sincerity of the divine Overtures? If the Overtures are real, your Title is unqueſtionable.—Nay; there is more than an Overture. You have an *actual* Gift, from the Almighty MAJESTY. *To Us*, ſays the Prophet, *a Child is born**. *To Us*—He repeats the precious Truth; to declare his exuberant Joy †, and denote the abſolute Certainty

* Iſai. ix. 6.

† *Virgil* has copied the Prophet's *fine Manner*. He repreſents Joy, uttering her Sentiments, in the ſame

ty * of the Thing—*a Son is given.* Even GOD's own SON, the ever-bleſſed *JESUS*, to be our PROPITIATION, our SURETY, our complete REDEEMER.

Juſt caſt a Look upon yonder neat Lodge. Tho' placed in the Center of a ſpacious Field, it ſeems to be contiguous with the Extremity of the Viſta, which it terminates. The Eye, traveling over ſuch a Length of Ground, has almoſt loſt the Windows, and the decent Ornaments of the Front. But I ſhall not ſoon loſe the Idea of that amiable Munificence; which, as I was rambling one pleaſant Morning, and accidentally called at the Houſe, I learned from its preſent Owner.—He was, I find, one of your Servants. Had ſpent ſeveral Years in your Family. When He ſettled in the World, You beſtowed upon him that commodious Box, and a pretty adjacent Farm; to poſſeſs, without Moleſtation or Controul, during his Life.—Does He not reckon the little Eſtate, by virtue of your Donation, to be his own? As much his own, for the Time preſcribed, as if He had paid an Equivalent in Money?—Since the LORD *has given* Us his SON, and all his unutterable Merits; why ſhould We not, with an Aſſurance of Faith, receive the Gift, and look upon it as our own? Why ſhould we not confide in a Gift from JEHOVAH; and reckon

ſpirited Strain, with the ſame reiterated Earneſtneſs:

——————*Humilemque videmus*
Italiam. Italiam *primus conclamat Achates.*
Italiam *læto Socii Clamore ſalutant.*

* See Gen. xli. 32.

reckon it firmer, than the firmeſt Deed? Far more inviolable, than any royal Patent?

Ther. My Servant never affronted my Authority. If He had vilified my Character, or inſulted my Perſon, ſhould I then have been inclined to make the ſame advantageous Settlement?

Aſp. Herein appears the infinite Superiority of the divine Bounty. GOD is rich in Mercy, not only to the Obedient and Grateful, but to the Unthankful and Unworthy. *To the LORD our GOD*, ſays the Prophet, *belong Mercies and Forgiveneſſes*; in Meaſure ſuperabundant, and in Continuance unwearied. And this, *notwithſtanding We have* offended Him, by our manifold Failures in Duty. Nay, have *rebelled* * *againſt Him*, by the moſt flagrant Violations of his Law.

In

* *Dan.* ix. 9. The Original is מרדנו. Than which no Expreſſion, in the *Hebrew* Language, bears a more obnoxious Signification. It denotes the moſt *audacious* and the moſt *flagitious* Impiety. It denotes that *Rebellion, which is as the Sin of Witchcraft; and that Stubborneſs, which is as the Iniquity of Idolatry.* Yet, all virulent and execrable as it is, it does not ſuppreſs the Yearnings of divine Pity, nor ſuperſede the Exerciſe of divine Forgiveneſs.—With a Word derived from the ſame Root, *Saul*, when exaſperated almoſt to Madneſs, upbraids *Jonathan*. And we know Perſons ſo extremely incenſed, never ſpeak in the ſofteſt Terms; never touch the Subject with a Feather, but make their Tongue like a ſharp Sword.

May I venture to add? That our Tranſlators ſeem to miſtake the proper Application of the afore-mentioned Paſſage. They repreſent *Saul*'s Invective, flying as *wide* of the Mark, as it is *over-charged* with Malice.—*Son of the perverſe rebellious Woman!* This might be aſſerted, without the leaſt Impeachment of *Jonathan*'s perſonal Loyalty.—Beſides, is it not exceſſively indecent, as well

In ſweet Concert with his prophetical Leſſon, ſings the tranſported *Pſalmiſt*; *Thou, LORD,* in thy ſacred Humanity, *haſt aſcended up on High*: aſcended, from the low Caverns of the Tomb, to the higheſt Throne, in the higheſt Heavens.—*Thou haſt led Captivity captive*: haſt aboliſhed Death, that univerſal Tyrant; and ſubdued thoſe Powers of Darkneſs, which had inſlaved the whole World.—Like a glorious *and* triumphant Conqueror, Thou haſt alſo *received Gifts*; not merely for thy own Fruition, but to confer on Others, by way of honorary and enriching Largeſs.—What are thoſe Gifts, *Theron?*

Ther. The Gifts of the Goſpel, I ſuppoſe: Pardon of Sin, the Influences of the HOLY SPIRIT, and the various Privileges of *Chriſtianity*. Which conſtitute the preſent Happineſs of Mankind, and prepare them for future Bliſs.

Aſp. You rightly judge.—And for whom were thoſe royal, thoſe heavenly Donatives received? If You have an Inclination to beſtow, a finely-wrought Piece of Plate, or an exquiſitely finiſhed Picture; what Names preſent themſelves to your Thoughts? What Perſons are the Objects of your Choice? The *approved* Friend, or *diſtinguiſhed* Favourite, I make no Queſtion.—But for *whom* (let me aſk again, ſince it is a Point of the laſt Importance) were thoſe heavenly Donatives deſigned?

Ther.

as abſolutely unreaſonable, to reflect upon the Mother, for the Miſdemeanours of the Son? Surely, the Clauſe ſhould be rendered, in perfect Conſiſtence with the Genius of the Original, *Thou Son of perverſe Rebellion*; or, more agreeably to the *Engliſh* Idiom, *Thou perverſe rebellious Wretch!* 1 Sam. xx. 30.

Ther. Let me recollect.—*Thou receivedſt Gifts*—not for fallen Angels, but *for Men*—And not for thy Friends, but for thy Enemies—yea, *for the Rebellious* alſo *.—Merciful Heaven! What a Word is this! And does it come from the GOD of Truth?—Gifts! Divine Gifts! Gifts of unſpeakable Value, and eternal Duration! And theſe to be conferred on Enemies, on the Rebellious! Wretches, who are deſtitute of all gracious Qualifications; who deſerve not the leaſt Favour; but have Reaſon to expect the Frowns of Indignation, and the Sword of Vengeance!

Aſp. Thus it is written, in thoſe ſacred Conſtitutions; which are far more ſtedfaſt and unalterable, than the Law of the *Medes* and *Perſians*.—Thus it is ſpoken, by the Mouth of that Almighty BEING; with whom there is no Variableneſs, nor the leaſt Shadow of Turning.—Let Us not, my dear Friend, by unreaſonable Unbelief, fruſtrate all theſe Promiſes, and reject *our own* Mercies. Let us not, by an evil *Heart of Unbelief*, make GOD a Lyar; and make Ourſelves, of all Creatures, moſt miſerable.

Formerly, 'tis true, We uſed to conſider the divine Juſtice, as an unſurmountable Bar to our Happineſs. In ſuch a Caſe, the juſt GOD and eternal Miſery, appeared inſeparable Ideas. But the Goſpel has ſhewed Us an Expedient, whereby it is conſiſtent with the Glory of all the divine Perfections, to ſave even the worſt of Men. It ſhews Us, how the LORD JEHOVAH may be *inflexibly juſt*, yet receive ſuch *guilty Wretches* to his Mercy, his Favour, his everlaſting Good-will.—O! let Us not render this unexpected, and divinely rich

* Pſal. lxviii. 18.

Grace, of none Effect with regard to Ourſelves, by ſaying each in his Heart; "What ſignifies all "this to me? Unleſs I can find ſome ſuperior "Excellency in myſelf—ſomething, whereby the "DEITY ſhould diſtinguiſh me, as his Favourite "—for which He ſhould reſpect me, as more deſerv-"ing than others."

Ther. Thanks, *Aſpaſio*, many Thanks for your Admonition. It is both kind and ſalutary. Methinks, it begins to chear my Spirit, and diſſipate my uneaſy Apprehenſions. O! may theſe Clouds on my Mind, follow thoſe in the Firmament! For a conſiderable Time, they hung abroad their extenſive Sables, to damp the Ardour, and abate the Glare of Day. The Sun has been colouring their fleecy Skirts, and ſpreading over the floating Screen a Variety of interchangeable Hues. Now He begins to edge them with Gold, and ſhine them into Silver. A ſure Indication, that (like the *glittering*, but *tranſitory* Toys, which they repreſent) they will ſoon be ſwept from the Horizon, and ſeen no more. —The bright Orb, while we are ſpeaking, burſts the Veil; and, from a voluminous Pomp of parting Clouds, pours a Flood of Splendor over all the Face of Nature.—We ſhall quickly perceive this open Situation, too hot to conſiſt with Pleaſure: and muſt be obliged to ſeek for Shelter, in the ſhady Apartments of the Houſe.

Aſp. We muſt. And will you admit me, *Theron*, into thoſe ſhady Apartments?

Ther. Admit You, *Aſpaſio!*—I am ſurpriſed at your Queſtion. I thought You had known me better: and am ſorry, it ſhould be needful to aſſure

You, that my Houſe is as much yours, as it is mine. The more freely You command it, the more highly you will gratify the Owner.

Aſp. May I believe my *Theron?* Does He ſpeak from his Heart? Or muſt I conclude, that He plauſibly profeſſes, what He has no Intention to perform? —Would you be pleaſed, If I ſhould obſtinately perſiſt in theſe diſhonourable Suſpicions, notwithſtanding all your friendly Proteſtations?

Ther. My dear *Aſpaſio*, I ſee your Deſign. I ſee, and am aſhamed. Aſhamed to think, that I ſhould fanſy myſelf more punctual in my Profeſſions, than GOD is true to his Word.—*LORD, I believe. Help Thou mine Unbelief!*

DIA-

DIALOGUE XVI.

OUR Friends had agreed upon a Viſit to *Philenor*. They rode through a fine, open, fruitful Country. Which was covered with Crops of ripened Corn; and occupied by ſeveral Parties of Ruſtics, gathering in the copious *Harveſt*.

The *Rye*, white and hoary as it were with Age, waved its bearded Billows, and gave a dry huſky Ruſtle before the Breeze.—The *Wheat*, laden with Plenty, and beautifully brown, hung the heavy Head; and invited, by its bending Poſture, the Reaper's Hand. Platts of *Barley*, and Acres of *Oats*, ſtood whitening in the Sun. Upright, and perfectly even, as though the Gardener's Shears had clipped them at the Top, they gratified the Spectator's Eye, and gladdened the Farmer's Heart.—*Beans* partly clad in native Green, partly tranſformed and tawny with the parching Ray, were preparing the laſt Employ for the crooked Weapon.—

Some of the Grain lay flat, in regular Rows, on the new-made Stubble. Some was erected, in graceful Shocks, along the briſtly Ridges. Some, conveyed homewards on the loaded Waggon, nodded over the groaning Axle.

The Villages ſeemed to be empty, and all their Inhabitants poured into the Plains. Here were Perſons of each Sex, and of every Age.—The luſty *Youths*, ſtooping to their Work, plied the Sickle; or ſwept, with their Scythes, the falling Ranks.—The ſprightly *Females* followed, binding the Handfuls into Sheaves, or piling the Swarths into haſty Cocks. Diſperſed up and down were the *Children* of the Needy, gleaning the ſcattered Ears, and picking their ſcanty Harveſt.—Nor were the *old* People abſent; but crawling into the Sun, or ſitting on a ſhady Eminence, they beheld the Toils—the pleaſing Toils, which they once ſuſtained.

This is the moſt joyful Period of the Countryman's Life; the long expected Crown of all his Labours. For this, He broke the ſtubborn Glebe, and manured the impoveriſhed Soil. For this, He bore the ſultry Beams of Summer, and ſhrunk not from the pinching Blaſts of Winter. For this, He toiled away the Year, in a Round of ceaſeleſs but willing Activity. Knowing, that *the Huſbandman muſt labour, before he partakes of the Fruits* *.—And will not the bleſſed Hope of everlaſting Life; will not the

* 2 *Tim.* ii. 6. *Beza* thinks, that in ſettling the Conſtruction of this Verſe, the Adverb πρῶτον ſhould be connected with the Participle κοπιῶντα. If ſo, the Tranſlation exhibited above, may bid fair for Acceptance; and,

the bright Expectation of conſummate Bliſs, animate Us with an equally chearful Reſolution, both to reſiſt the Temptations, and diſcharge the Duties of our preſent State?

Short ſeemed the Way, and quick paſſed the Time, as they traveled through ſuch Scenes of rural Abundance, and rural Delight.—Before they were aware, the Horſes ſtopped at *Philenor*'s Seat. Where they found, to their no ſmall Diſappointment, that the Maſter was gone abroad. They alighted however, and took a Walk in the *Gardens*.

The Gardens, at proper Intervals, and in well-choſen Situations, were interſperſed with various Pieces of *Statuary*. At the Turn of a Corner, You are—not ſhocked with a naked Gladiator, or a beaſtly *Priapus*—but unexpectedly entertained with the Image of *Tully*. He is juſt riſen from his Seat, and upon the Point of addreſſing Himſelf to ſome important Oration. A reverential Awe appears in his Countenance; ſuch as ſilently acknowledges, that He is going to plead before the Rulers of the World. His thoughtful Aſpect, and gracefully expanded Arm, ſpeak to the Eye, before the Tongue has uttered a Syllable. We look round for the venerable Audience, and are agreeably ſurpriſed, to find nothing but Hedges and Trees.

You

and, one of the moſt celebrated Hiſtorians, may have the Honour of commenting on the greateſt of the Apoſtles; *Næ illi falſi ſunt, qui diverſiſſimas Res expectant, Ignaviæ, Voluptatem, & Præmia Virtutis.* SALUST. *i. e.* They are, beyond all Diſpute, moſt egregiouſly miſtaken, who hope to unite thoſe incompatible Things, the Pleaſures of Indolence, and the Rewards of Induſtry.

You enter an Alley, lined on either Side with a verdant Fan; and having no Variety of Objects to diverſify the intermediate Space, your View is conducted to a magnificent Building at the End. As you walk along, contemplating the maſterly Performance in Architecture, a ſudden Opening diverts your Attention; and preſents you with ſome ſtriking Imitation of virtuous or heroic Life.—Not the *Macedonian* Madman; nor *Sweden*'s royal Knight-errant; nor *Cæſar*, infamouſly renowned for his ſlaughtered Millions; but the truly gallant *Czar*. A drawn Sword in his Hand, and a commanding majeſtic Sternneſs on his Brow. The Weapon is held in the moſt menacing Poſture; and many a Spectator has been obſerved to ſtart back, with Apprehenſions of Fear. It is that glorioufly ſevere Attitude, in which the grateful Citizens of *Narva* beheld Him, and in which all Poſterity will admire Him; when He turned upon his own victorious, but ungovernable Troops, and threatened to drench the Dagger in their Hearts, if they did not immediately deſiſt from Rapine * and Slaughter; immediately allow Quarter to their vanquiſhed Foes.

If here the Marble threatens, and the Hero frowns, in yonder Alcove the Pencil has diſplayed a ſofter Scene. There, in a lonely Receſs, and under

* "As ſoon as the Soldiers were Maſters of the Town, "(*Narva*) they fell to Plunder, and gave themſelves "up to the moſt enormous Barbarities. The *Czar* ran "from Place to Place, to put a ſtop to the Diſorder and "Maſſacre. He was even obliged to kill with his own "Hand ſeveral *Muſcovites*, who did not hearken to his "Orders."

VOLTAIRE's *Hiſt. Charl.* XII.

der the melancholy Shades of Cypreſs, the brave *Abradates* claims our Pity. Fallen is the generous Warrior, and proſtrate on the Ground. See his manly Features, ſerene and intrepid ſtill, though a dying Paleneſs has clouded all. Cloſed are thoſe ſprightly Eyes, which uſed to glow with Courage and martial Ardour. Cloſed, alaſs! never to be opened more; no, not to behold his amiable *Panthea*.—The amiable *Panthea*, kneeling on the Earth, and bending over the Corpſe, has raiſed the lifeleſs Head. Her own droops like a Lily ſurcharged with Rain; yet ſhe has placed the lovely Burthen on her Arm, and bathed it with her Tears. See! with what Tenderneſs ſhe ſupports it, and with what Fondneſs cheriſhes it. While *Cyrus*, to expreſs a diſtinguiſhed Regard for the deceaſed Prince, claſps his cold Hand. Diſtreſſing Miſtake! He ſtarts, He is amazed, to behold that able and truſty Arm, ſuddenly falling from the Shoulder-Blade. The Tear ſwells into his Eyes, and ſpeaks the Sorrow of his royal Heart. But what can ſpeak the Anguiſh, which moans in thy Countenance, and rends thy Heart, thou afflicted *Panthea!*—O! that thou hadſt known the Truths, and taſted the Comforts of *Chriſtianity!* Then might thy Reſignation to Providence have been as exemplary, as thy Fidelity to thy Lord. For want of this moſt conſolatory Knowledge, what frantic and fatal Purpoſes are forming in thy Breaſt! We are ſhocked at the Apprehenſion of ſo horrid a Deed. We turn away from the Sight, and would loſe the very Thought, in ſome more pleaſing Spectacle.

Behold a Spectacle, more pleaſing, and very different. Under a circular Dome, ſupported by Pillars

lars of the *Doric* Order, and in a Spot where ſeveral Walks center, ſtands—not the *Venus a Medicis*; corrupting, while it captivates, the World—but a *Spartan* Mother. Her Habit decent and graceful; ſomewhat like the *Juno Matrona* of the *Romans*, as She is finely depictured in Mr. *Spence*'s *Polymetis*. Her Air ſtately and reſolved; expreſſive of Dignity, yet mingled with Softneſs. She holds a Shield: is in the Act of delivering it to her Son; a Youth, ſetting out for the Army, and going to hazard his Life, in the Defence of his Country. She is ſuppoſed to add that ſpirited and magnanimous Exhortation, which is engraven on the Protuberance of the Buckler—η ταν, η επι τας—*Bring it back, my Son, as thy Trophy; or, be brought back upon it, as thy Bier.*

I am particularly pleaſed, ſaid *Theron*, with the Contrivance of this laſt Ornament. It is regulated by one of the moſt refined Rules of Art; not to laviſh away all the Beauty at a ſingle View, but to make a ſkilful Reſerve for ſome future Occaſion.—The Dome and the Columns afford Pleaſure, when beheld at a conſiderable Diſtance. The fine animated Figure in the midſt diſplays its Graces, on a nearer Approach. By which means, the Attention is kept awake, and the Entertainment continues new.

But what I principally admire, is the *Spirit* or *Style* of the Decorations in general. They put me in mind of a very juſt Remark, which Mr. *Pope* has ſomewhere made. It is, if I remember right, to this Effect.—"A Man not only ſhews his Taſte, "but his Virtue, in the Choice of his Ornaments. "A proper Piece of Hiſtory, repreſented in Painting "on a rich Man's Walls, (*or exhibited in Imagery*

"*amidſt*

" *amidſt his Gardens*) is very often a better Leſſon, " than any He could teach by his Converſation. " In this Senſe, the Stones may be ſaid to ſpeak, " when Men cannot, or will not."—All but the comparative or ſatyrical Part of the Obſervation, I would apply to the Proſpect before Us, and its worthy Owner.

Aſp. Philenor's Gardens are, I think, more chaſte and delicate in their Ornaments, than a certain *collegiate Church*. In the latter Place, We might reaſonably expect the ſtricteſt Adherence to Purity, if We ſhould not meet with the Symbols of Piety, and Incitements to Religion.—What then would be the Reflections of a judicious Obſerver, if, in ſuch a ſolemn and venerable Edifice, He ſhould ſee a huge brawny Fellow ſtuck up againſt the Wall; with his Poſteriors half bare; his whole Body more than half naked; and in an Attitude none of the moſt decent *.—Excuſe me, *Theron*. I confeſs myſelf

* Referring to the Monument, lately erected for MAJOR GENERAL FLEMING, in *Weſtminſter-Abbey*. Where, under the General's Buſt, are placed *Hercules* and *Pallas*, *Hercules*, with his Club and Lion's Skin, in the Manner related above. *Pallas*, with a Mirror and a Serpent at her Side.—The Reader may ſee a Picture and an Explanation of this Monument, in the *Gentleman*'s *Magazine* for *Auguſt* 1754.

As this Church has been the Burial-place of the moſt illuſtrious Perſonages, for many Centuries; as it is the Place, where *all* our Kings receive their Crowns, and *many* of them depoſit their Aſhes; as it is ſingularly eminent for its Antiquities and Monuments; there is a large Reſort both of Natives and Foreigners, to view its grand and awful Curioſities. Whatever, therefore, is erected in a Place ſo circumſtanced and ſo diſtinguiſhed, ſhould not only diſplay an Air of *Elegance* in the Execution, but include a *Beauty of Holineſs* in the Deſign. Becauſe,

ſelf aſhamed, even to recite the Deſcription. How then can the Spectacle itſelf become the Houſe of Divine Worſhip?

Ther. But perhaps this ſame brawny Fellow may repreſent a *Heathen* Demigod; one of the *Idols* worſhiped by Antiquity; the tutelary Deity of Valour.

Aſp. And will this juſtify the Practice? Does not this add Profaneneſs to Immodeſty? Are We *Chriſtians* to thank *Hercules* for the Valour of our Warriors, and make our Acknowledgments to *Pallas* for the Conduct of our Generals? Shall We *Chriſtians* behold with Admiration, or recognize as our Benefactors, what the Apoſtle has ſtigmatized under the Character of *Devils* *?

If HE, who overthrew the Tables of the Money-changers, had taken a Walk in theſe famous Cloyſters, I am apt to ſuſpect, He would have paid no very agreeable Compliment to this fine Piece of Statuary. *Take theſe Things hence*, would probably have been his Command; and, *make not the Precincts of your Temple a Chamber of* Pagan *Imagery*, his Rebuke †.—Neither is it at all unlikely, that the Image itſelf, notwithſtanding its inimitable

cauſe, nothing can lay claim to the το καλον, which is not poſſeſſed of the το πρεπον. Nor can any Performances, thus ſituated, be pronounced truly graceful, but ſuch only as correſpond with the Character, and ſubſerve the Deſign of the ſacred Edifice.

It was thought, by a very able Critic and a very candid Writer, that *mere Impropriety* of Taſte, in ornamenting one of the Monuments, called for his Cenſure. Surely then a Violation of *Decency*, and an Approach to *Paganiſm*, call more loudly for public Animadverſion, and proper Reformation. See *Spect.* Vol. I. N° 26.

* 1 Cor. x. 20. † John ii. 16.

Workmanſhip, might have ſhared the Fate of its Kinſman *Dagon*.

——When the captive Ark
Maim'd his brute Image, Head and Hands lopp'd off
In his own Temple, on the Groundſell Edge
When He fell flat, and ſham'd his Worſhipers *.

Ther. But how ſhould the Artiſt expreſs the great Atchievements and the ſhining Qualities of his Hero, if You will not allow Him to make uſe of theſe *ſignificant* Emblems?

Aſp. I queſtion, whether they are ſo very ſignificant. The Mirror ſeems to characterize a Fop, rather than a Soldier. It leads Us to think of a ſoft *Narciſſus*, admiring Himſelf; rather than a ſagacious General, planning the Operations of the Campaign.—Beſides; is ſacred Literature ſo deſtitute of proper Emblems, that We muſt borrow the Decorations of our Churches, and the Trophies of our Conquerors, from the Dreams of Superſtition or the Deluſions of Idolatry? How juſt and expreſſive are thoſe emblematical Repreſentations, exhibited in *Ezekiel*'s Viſion! Where Activity and Speed are ſignified, by *Hands* in Conjunction with *Wings*; and the deep, the complicated, yet ever harmonious Schemes of Providence, by a *Wheel in the Middle of a Wheel* †.—With what Propriety and Force are the nobleſt Endowments pictured, in the Revelations of St. *John*, and their grand Machinery! Superior Wiſdom and Benevolence of Heart, are deſcribed by the Face of *a Man*; Strength of Mind and Intrepidity of Spirit, by the Viſage of *a Lion*; Calmneſs of Temper and indefatigable Application, by the

* Milton, B. I. 458. † Ezek. i. 8, 16.

the Features of *an Ox*; a penetrating Diſcernment, and an expeditious Habit of acting, by the Form of *a flying Eagle* *.

Theſe Hieroglyphics are graceful, are pertinent, and ſuch as every Spectator will underſtand. Whereas, the Devices of our new monumental Encomium are, to the Unlearned, hardly intelligible; to the Serious, little better than profane; and to every Beholder, indelicate if not immodeſt.—*Philenor*, I imagine, would bluſh to admit them into his Walks or Avenues. And I am ſorry to find them received into the moſt antient †, moſt renowned, and moſt frequented Church in the Kingdom.

Talking in this Manner, they ſtroll into a ſpacious Lawn, terminated by a very remarkable Grove; formed on that uncommon Plan, propoſed by Mr. *Addiſon*, in one of his *Spectators*.—It conſiſts wholly of *Evergreens*. *Firs*, clad in vegetable Silver, point their reſinous Leaves, and ſhoot aloft their towering Cones. *Laurels* arrayed in gloſſy Green, ſpread their ample Foliage, and throw abroad their rambling Boughs.—*Bay-trees* are expanded into a Fan, which no Weather can tarniſh; or rounded into a Column, which knows not how to moulder. While the *Lauruſtinus* runs out into a beautiful Irregularity of Shape; and compacts her reddening Gems,

* Rev. iv. 7.

† Some Antiquarians trace back the Origin of this Church, even to the Reign of *Lucius*. Which is more than the Space of 1500 Years. Others ſuppoſe, that *Sebert*, King of the *Eaſt-Saxons*, about the Year of our LORD 605, built the firſt religious Structure on this Spot. All agree, that it was re-edified and enlarged by *Edward* the *Confeſſor*; and that the preſent ſtately and magnificent Fabric, was founded by *Henry* III.

in order to unfold her whitening Bloom.—In one Place lies a Dale, gently ſinking, and coated with the *Chamomile*'s natural Frieze; which never changes its Colour, never loſes its Gloſs. Near it, and ſcooped, You would imagine, from the ſame Hollow, riſes a Mount, ſoftly ſwelling, and ſhagged with *Furze*; gay in their own perennial Green, and generally decked with golden Bloſſoms.—Here, You are led through a ſerpentine Walk, and Hedges of *Box*; and find, perhaps, a ſolitary Pyramid or a capacious Urn, each compoſed of unfading *Yew*. There You look through a ſtrait Alley, fenced on either Side, and arched over Head, with mantling *Philirea*; at the Extremity, appears an Obeliſk ſheathed in *Ivy*, and ornamented with its ſable Cluſters, as with Wreaths of living Sculpture.—Scattered up and down, are ſeveral Sorts of *Holly*; ſome ſtriped with White; ſome ſpotted with Yellow; ſome preparing to brighten and beautify the Scene, with Berries of glowing Scarlet.

The greateſt Part of the Plantation is, not ranged in order, but thrown into little Groups, or rude Clumps. Which form an agreeable Variety, reſulting from Art, yet reſembling Confuſion.—The whole aſcends, Tree above Tree, in a regular *Slope*; from the diminutive Mezereon, to the loftly Cypreſs, or the loftier Pine. By this Diſpoſition, the Stems and Trunks being concealed, nothing is diſplayed to your Sight, but the leafy Tops. The ſeveral Shadings of whoſe Attire, greatly diverſified and judiciouſly intermixed, compoſe a magnificent *Sheet* of Verdure. To this the free and enlarged Opening of the Lawn, affords a full View, and gives the moſt advantageous Aſpect. Than which,

eſpecially

eſpecially in the Winter-Seaſon, nothing can be more grand, more enlivened, or more pleaſing.

Aſp. There muſt be ſomething wonderfully agreeable in a Plantation, which appears lively and fruitful, when all its Neighbours of the wood-land Race, are barren, bleak, or dead. But, how much more chearing and delightful muſt it be; when *decrepit* Age, or bodily Infirmities, have laid waſte the Gratifications of our youthful Prime; to find a ſolid *undecaying* Pleaſure, in the Favour of GOD, and the Hope of Glory!—Now indeed the feathered Tribes reſort to the more flowing Umbrage of the Poplar and the Aſh. But amidſt *December*'s Cold, You ſhall obſerve them forſaking the *leafleſs* Woods, and flocking to this friendly Receptacle; hopping acroſs the ſunny Walks, or ſheltering themſelves, in the wet and ſtormy Day, under theſe *truſty* Boughs. So, the many thoughtleſs Creatures, who turn their Back upon Religion, amidſt the ſoft and ſoothing Careſſes of Proſperity; will want, extremely want, its *ſovereign Supports*, under the ſharp and diſtreſſing Aſſaults of Adverſity, Sickneſs, and Death.

This Collection, it is true, may not equal the Groves of annual Verdure, in Floridity of Dreſs; but it far exceeds them, in the Duration of its Ornaments. Ere long, yonder ſhewy Branches will be ſtript of their Holiday Clothes: whereas, theſe will retain their rural Honours. *Theſe* will be adorned with Flowers, and enriched with Berries; when *thoſe* are nothing but Rags, Nakedneſs, and Deformity.—Rags, Nakedneſs, and Deformity! Such will be every Shelter, and every Refuge for our poor, imperfect, ſinful Souls; excepting only the

Righteouſneſs of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. Every Thing elſe, will *fade as a Leaf* *; which the Summer nurſes, but the Winter is ſure to deſtroy. This, my *Theron*, and this alone is an *Evergreen*: always free for our Acceptance, and always effectual to ſave.

Ther. An Evergreen it is; or rather, the choiceſt Fruit in the Garden of Paradiſe. But it ſeems to be quite beyond my Reach. *JESUS CHRIST* has finiſhed every Requiſite, without any Exception, which may procure Acceptance for the guilty Perſon, and afford Relief to the guilty Conſcience—

Aſp. Of the moſt profane Wretch, that lives. —Add this to your Belief, or elſe You curtail the Grace of GOD, and diminiſh the Merit of *CHRIST*.

Ther. This is what I was going to add; I believe alſo, that if I was intereſted in this divine SAVIOUR, ſinful as I am, my Conſcience would have Peace, and my Soul ſhould live. But alaſs!—

Aſp. Your Manner of ſpeaking brings to my Mind, what I have ſomewhere read, concerning an Infant born with a Snake about its Neck. A ſtrange Kind of Necklace, You will ſay, for a human Creature to come into the World with. Perhaps, You will ſuſpect, or even more than ſuſpect; That Fancy muſt be the Mother, and the Midwife alſo, of this very ſingular Birth. Yet have a Care, You don't realize the Story. You have made an excellent Acknowledgment; which is like a fair and promiſing Infant. Theſe *buts* and *ifs*, theſe Doubts and Surmiſes, are a poiſonous Snake. Tear away the

* Iſai. lxiv. 6.

the miſchievous Incumbrance. Never ſuffer it to twiſt itſelf round the Neck of your good Confeſſion. You believe, that *CHRIST* has thoroughly finiſhed the great Work. Believe alſo, that there is no clogging or intervening Condition; no recommendatory Duty to be performed, in order to your full Participation of *CHRIST*; of his Peace-ſpeaking Blood, and his Life-giving Righteouſneſs. *Only believe*, and they are actually your own.

Ther. This is one of thoſe Sayings, which have often puzzled my Mind. I cannot conceive, how ſuch grand Bleſſings, and ſuch a complete Felicity, ſhould be made ours, only by Believing.

Apſ. This, or ſomething very much like it, puzzled and offended *Naaman* the *Syrian*. "Waſh! "Only waſh! In *Jordan!* The common Water of "the commoneſt River! Can this be attended with "ſuch extraordinary Conſequences? Can this cure "a Man of his inveterate Leproſy?"—Thus We are apt to argue: Only believe the Report of the Goſpel! Only believe, that GOD freely gives Us his incarnate SON, and all ſpiritual Bleſſings with Him! Is it poſſible, that this ſimple Expedient, ſhould be productive of ſuch noble Effects?—Surely, if We would obtain Remiſſion of Sins, Deliverance from Death, Righteouſneſs and everlaſting Life, We muſt *do ſome great Thing.*

Faith, in this Reſpect, is like its divine Object. It "has no Form nor Comelineſs;" nothing pompous or ſhewy. It ſeems a little Thing. It really is a little Thing. But it pleaſes the moſt high GOD, to compaſs his magnificent Ends, by little and ordinary Means. *CHRIST dwelleth in our Hearts*, ſaith the Apoſtle. How? By pious Works

and laborious Pre-requiſites? No; but merely *by Faith.—Ye received the SPIRIT.* How? By the Works of the Law? By your own Labour and Travail? No; only *by the Hearing of Faith.*

Beſides; can You conceive any other rational Way, whereby We may apprehend an unſeen *CHRIST*, and take Poſſeſſion of a promiſed Salvation, but only by aſſuring Ourſelves, that they are given to Us; and, in Conſequence of this Gift, regarding them as our own Property?

Ther. At other Times (ſo ſtrange is my Inconſiſtency!) I entertain ſuch an Idea of the Greatneſs of Faith, that I ſay within myſelf, "I cannot be-"lieve." My Mind is, as You formerly hinted, like the withered Arm.

Aſp. This Difficulty on your Mind, becauſe of the Greatneſs of Faith, is wholly founded on Miſtake. The Goſpel informs You, that whatever is neceſſary for your Salvation, is already done and obtained by *CHRIST.* That whatever is done and obtained by *CHRIST*, is freely given You by the GOD of all Grace. Conſequently, that You are called only to receive a Gift, not to perform a Work.

You, on the contrary, ſuppoſe; That Something more is to be done, Something to be acquired or executed by Yourſelf; before You may venture to call the Riches of *CHRIST* your own. This creates the inſuperable Difficulty. This renders your Mind like the withered Arm.—Whereas, when theſe Truths of the Goſpel are made manifeſt to your Conſcience; when You are enabled to ſee, that what *CHRIST* has wrought, is abſolutely ſufficient to procure all ſpiritual Bleſſings; that

what

what GOD has ſaid, is equally ſufficient to warrant an Application of all to Yourſelf; then HE, who bids You ſtretch out, ſtrengthens the withered Hand.

And will He not ſtrengthen? Can You doubt the Sincerity of his Call, or his Willingneſs to ſave the Weak, and the Wicked? Then go to Mount *Calvary*. *There* liſten to *the Sounding of his Bowels, and* ſee the Flowing *of his Mercies* *. Cannot You read a Language in each ſtreaming Wound, and hear a Voice in every dying Pang?—Do they not all ſpeak his infinite Love, even to wretched helpleſs Sinners? Do they not all addreſs You with that tender Remonſtrance, *O Thou of little Faith, wherefore doſt thou doubt* †?

Ther. Still the Difficulty recurs. Whether it be from any wrong Apprehenſion, of ſome great Thing to be done; or from an Averſeneſs of ſubmitting to the Way of Salvation by Grace; or an unaccountable Diſtruſt of the Certainty of what GOD has promiſed; whatever be the Cauſe, I am ſure, I feel my Impotence. Experience teaches me, what the Apoſtle affirms; *No Man can ſay*, with all his Heart, *that JESUS is the LORD*, who hath bought me with his Blood, *but by the HOLY GHOST.*

Aſp. You feel your Impotence—to what? To receive a free Gift, and call it your own? To truſt wholly, and without Reſerve, on the Word which GOD has ſpoken, and on the Work which *CHRIST* has wrought? Conſider the Caſe in this View, or elſe You will not only feel, but occaſion Impotence. You will not only find, but increaſe Difficulty.

I would

* Iſai. lxiii. 15. † Matt. xiv. 31.

I would employ my Thoughts, neither on the Greatneſs nor Littleneſs of Faith; neither on the Eaſe nor Difficulty of believing. I would rather dwell upon the ſuperabundant Grace of GOD, manifeſted in *CHRIST*, and granted to the moſt Unworthy. On this only proper Ground of Claim, I would endeavour, diligently endeavour, to aſſure my Soul of Salvation. In this Manner, waiting and praying for the divine SPIRIT, whoſe Office it is, to teſtify of *CHRIST*, *and bring near the REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs*. Yet his Influences are not to ſuperſede, but to encourage our own Efforts.—*Lay hold on eternal Life* *; here is our Duty. *Our Sufficiency is of GOD* †; here is our Encouragement. And O! what a glorious Encouragement, to have the Arm of Omnipotence, for our Support and our Succour!

Ther. How, or in what Manner, does the Divine SPIRIT work Faith in the Heart of a Sinner? You wonder, perhaps, that I aſk ſuch a Queſtion. But my Apprehenſions are ſtrangely dull, and my Views very dim, with regard to ſpiritual Things. If, in this Reſpect, I have any Sight, it is like his, who *ſaw Men as Trees walking*; ſaw theſe ſeveral Objects, but ſo obſcurely, ſo confuſedly, that He could not diſtinguiſh one from the other, only by the Circumſtance of Motion.

Aſp. The moſt inlightened Minds ſee only in part; and all have Reaſon, to make the blind Beggar's Supplication, their own Requeſt; *LORD, that I may receive my Sight!*—The Operation of the Holy SPIRIT in producing Faith, is thus deſcribed by a Maſter in *Iſrael*; "The Divine SPIRIT

* 1 Tim. vi. 19. † 2 Cor. iii. 5.

" SPIRIT brings *CHRIST* and his Righteouſ-
" neſs nigh unto Us in the Promiſe of the Goſpel;
" clearing at the ſame Time our Right and War-
" rant to intermeddle with all, without Fear of vi-
" cious Intromiſſion; encouraging and enabling to
" a Meaſure of confident Application, and taking
" Home all to Ourſelves, freely, without Money,
" and without Price."

Ther. The true Belief, is ſo refined and exalted a Virtue, that I very much queſtion, whether I ſhall ever be able attain it.

Aſp. The true Belief is never to be conſidered, in the Light You mention. Not as a refined and exalted Virtue; but as a Receiving of thoſe Benefits, which, received and enjoyed, are the Source of all virtuous and godly Affections. When, proceeding upon the divine Grant, You behold *CHRIST* as your Righteouſneſs and Strength, then You truly believe. You believe that Truth, which can never diſappoint nor fail. You receive that Gift, which enriches with Grace, and entitles to Glory.

Ther. Is not your Definition of Faith very refined and exalted?

Aſp. Give me Leave to enquire, how You became acquainted with my Definition of Faith?

Ther. I am not ſo inattentive a Reader of your Letters, as to forget your Account of this momentous Point. " Faith, You ſay, is a real Perſuaſion *,
" warranted

* *Budæus* and *Stephens* derive the original Word from πίστις, He *is perſuaded:* and, I think, very properly. For, whatever We believe, of that We have a real Perſuaſion.—The latter moſt accurate and maſterly Critic

" warranted by GOD's Word, that the bleſſed " *JESUS* has ſhed his Blood for *my Sins*; has " fulfilled all Righteouſneſs in *my Stead*; and ob- " tained eternal Redemption *for me.*"

Aſp. Where is the extraordinary Refinement of all this? Nothing can be more plain; more ſimple; or better ſuited to the meaneſt Capacity.—Where is the unſurmountable Difficulty of all this? To believe ſuch Things, is not Work or Labour, but Reſt and Peace.—It is nothing more than crediting a Report. A Report, made by infinite Veracity, for Men to believe. A Report, made by infinite Goodneſs, for ſinful Men to believe. Were not our Minds ſtrangely prejudiced, and unaccountably darkened, nothing would appear more becoming and reaſonable; nothing would prove more practicable and delightful.

Ther. Does Faith then amount to a *Perſuaſion?*

Aſp. The Apoſtle, deſcribing the Faith of the ancient Saints, declares; *They ſaw the Promiſes afar off, and were perſuaded of them, and embraced them.* They *ſaw* the Promiſes of Salvation, by a REDEEMER to come; this implies a Knowledge of them—they were *perſuaded*; this implies a Conviction of their certain Truth—they *embraced* * them; this denotes an Application of all to themſelves. And theſe Things were written for our Example; that We ſhould go and embrace them likewiſe.

The

gives this Interpretation of πίστις. *Perſuaſio certa, quam in nobis efficit Spiritus Sanctus, de Salute in Chriſto promiſſa, quam ſibi quiſque credendo applicat.* To corroborate which Expoſition, He adds; *Hac etiam in Significatione Nomen Fidei a Theologis Latinis receptum fuit.*

* Heb. xi. 13.

The ſame Apoſtle, enlarging on the Faith of *Abraham*, adds; *Being fully perſuaded, that what GOD had promiſed, He was able alſo to perform* *. Here, You ſee, is *Perſuaſion—full* Perſuaſion—firſt, of GOD's Will, becauſe He had promiſed; then, of his Power to accompliſh his Word, even though natural Impoſſibilities ſtood in the Way. In this twofold Perſuaſion, the Faith of our Father *Abraham* conſiſted. And We are called to tread in the Steps of his Faith: conſequently, to be perſuaded of GOD's Will to ſave Us, from Sin and Hell; of his Power to ſave Us by the Blood and Righteouſneſs of his SON.

Ther. Is Faith, chriſtian Faith, a Perſuaſion that all theſe Bleſſings are for *me?* Does it imply a ſpecial Application of the Benefits to a Man's own Self?

Aſp. Don't You wiſh, that it may imply and comprehend all this? Is it not infinitely deſirable? Will it not be inexpreſſibly comfortable? If it really was Matter of doubtful Diſputation, methinks, We ſhould long to have it aſcertained and eſtabliſhed. But, bleſſed be the divine Compaſſion, it is as little to be doubted, as it is earneſtly to be deſired.

Hear what a very valuable Writer delivers on this Subject. Exhorting to believe on the *LORD JESUS*, He thus explains his Meaning; "That "is, be verily perſuaded in your Heart, that "*JESUS CHRIST* is yours, and that You "ſhall

* *Rom.* iv. 21. Compare *Rom.* xiv. *Ver.* 14. with *Ver.* 22. There, *I know and am perſuaded*, is the apoſtolical Expoſition of the Word *Faith*. See alſo 2 *Tim.* i. 12. Where πεπεισμαι is explanatory of πεπιστευκα. *I am perſuaded*, gives the true Meaning of *I have believed*.

" ſhall have Life and Salvation by Him; that what-
" ſoever *CHRIST* did for the Redemption of
" Mankind, He did it for You."

If this Writer's Opinion has not Weight enough to incline the Scale, hear our own Church. You once apprehended, that my Attachment to the Church of *England* was unſettled and wavering. Judge now, who has moſt thoroughly imbibed her Doctrines, and is moſt invariably tenacious of her true Intereſts.—The firſt Part of the Homily concerning the Sacrament, addreſſes each Reader in particular, and gives Him this Definition of Faith. " It is a Belief, not only that the Death of " *CHRIST* is available, for the Remiſſion of " Sins, and Reconciliation with GOD; but " alſo that He made a full and ſufficient Sacrifice " *for Thee*, a perfect Cleanſing for *thy Sins*."

If You acquieſce not in either of theſe Determinations, hear an infallible Umpire. *I live*, ſays the Apoſtle *Paul*, *by Faith in the SON of GOD*; or, to expreſs myſelf in a more clear and determinate Manner, I live by a firm Perſuaſion, that *He loved me, and gave Himſelf for me.* This pacifies my Conſcience. This is the Source of my Joy, and the Motive to my Obedience. In ſhort; this is the Principle of my whole ſpiritual Life.

My Notion of Faith, You ſee, is not without a Precedent. It is undeniably the Voice of our Eſtabliſhment; it is apparently the Senſe of Scripture; and it gives Us a *clear intelligible* Idea, ſuited to the moſt common Acceptation of the Word. Such as would naturally ariſe in the Mind of a Stranger, who, without any Bias on his Judgment, ſhould inquire

inquire into the Purport of our Religion, or conſider the Language of our Bible.

Ther. How ſuited to the moſt *common Acceptation* of the Word?

Aſp. When You ſent a Meſſage to your Tenant —who, in his laſt Sickneſs, expreſſed ſo much Uneaſineſs on account of his numerous Family, and embarraſſed Circumſtances—aſſuring Him, that you had canceled the Bond, and forgiven his Debt. When You told the poor Woman—whoſe Huſband fell from the loaded Waggon, and broke both his Legs—that you would order a Surgeon to attend Him, and would continue his weekly Pay. *How* did they regard, *how* receive your promiſed Kindneſs? *So* let Us credit the gracious Declarations of our GOD; *ſo* receive the joyful Report of his Goſpel; and then we ſhall anſwer the Import of the Word *Faith*—then we ſhall truly *believe*.

Ther. Where have We, in Scripture, any Thing parallel or ſimilar to theſe Inſtances?

Aſp. Have You never read the Words of *Micah*; *Who is a GOD like unto Thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, and paſſeth by Tranſgreſſion*?* Here is the gracious Declaration—*He will turn again*; *He will have Compaſſion upon Us*; *He will ſubdue our Iniquities* †. Here is the joyful Report.—And why my Friend, why ſhould We pay leſs Credit to the ever-living JEHOVAH, than to a Man "whoſe Breath is "in his Noſtrils?" Is there Treachery with the HOLY ONE of *Iſrael?* Does the LORD make, and then violate his Promiſe?

Ther. GOD has never violated his Promiſe, when it was expreſly made, and particularly applied.

* Mic. vii. 18. † Mic. vii. 19.

plied. But, in this Circumſtance, there is a wide Difference between the Caſe of your Friend and the Caſe of his poor People. I *named* the Object of my Compaſſion, in one of the Inſtances; and made a *perſonal* Application, in the other. Neither of which is done in the Scriptures.—I don't find it any where revealed in the Bible, That *CHRIST* ſhed his Blood *for me* in particular. Neither have I read, in the old Teſtament or the new, That the *LORD JESUS* fulfilled all Righteouſneſs *for Theron*. Therefore I cannot ſee, what Ground I have to believe this Propoſition, from any ſcriptural Authority.

Aſp. But my Friend, it is revealed and You have read, That the *LORD JESUS* ſhed his Blood for Sinners. And are You excluded from the Benefit? When an Act of Indemnity is publiſhed, even the greateſt Tranſgreſſors, the Ringleaders in the Rebellion, have nothing elſe to do, but only to enquire, whether *they* are *excepted*. They are not to expect, that their Names ſhould be mentioned, as the particular Objects of their Sovereign's Favour. It is ſufficient, abundantly ſufficient, if they are not particularly diſclaimed. If this is not done, they may, they ought, they do, moſt confidently claim the royal Clemency in behalf of themſelves. So ought You and I to act, in the important Caſe under Conſideration.

Farther; You are not unacquainted with the Hiſtory of the three Children, condemned by *Nebuchadnezzar* to the burning fiery Furnace. You have read, in the old Teſtament, an Account of *their* Faith; and You find it propoſed, in the new

Teſtament, as a Model for *ours*.—Let Us then conſider, What their Faith was. Did they ſay within themſelves? "GOD is able, 'tis true, and "willing to deliver his Servants. This is affirm-"ed in the Books of *Moſes* and the Prophets. But "We no where find it is aſſerted, that He is will-"ing to deliver *Us*; to deliver *Shadrach*, *Meſhet*, "and *Abednego* from this horrible Death."—Not ſuch their Method of arguing. On the contrary; they aſſured themſelves, that what the LORD had promiſed to his Servants in general, He would make good to them in particular. Hear their own Words. They are worthy to be had in everlaſting Remembrance. *Our GOD, whom We ſerve, is able to deliver Us from the burning fiery Furnace; and He will deliver Us out of thine Hand, O King.* This was their Profeſſion. This their Confidence.—Since We are called to an Imitation of their Faith, ought not ſuch to be the Language of our Souls? "Our REDEEMER, in whom We truſt, "*is able* to ſave Us to the uttermoſt; and *He* "*will* ſave Us, from thy Guilt, O Sin; from "thy Malice, O Satan."

Ther. Still, if I am not named, methinks, I ſhould be pointed out, by ſome diſtinguiſhing Circumſtances. This is the Way of Scripture. *Antiochus*, the Perſecutor of the *Jews*, is not indeed named by the Prophet *Daniel*. But He is painted in ſuch very ſignificant Colours, as moſt evidently declare, for whom the Picture was drawn. It is not expreſly ſaid, either in the ſecond Epiſtle to the *Theſſalonians*, or in the whole Book of the *Revelation*, that the *Papiſh* Faction is Antichriſt. But it has ſo many of his Features, that (as a ju-

dicious Perſon ſaid) if an Hue and Cry was made for the latter, I ſhould, without any Scruple, apprehend the former.

Aſp. Will this content You? Will this be ſufficient to perſuade You? Then it is very fully and very exactly done.—When the Grace of GOD is revealed, the Objects of this ineffable Goodneſs are characterized; and I am beyond Meaſure miſtaken, if You do not find Yourſelf in the Number.

They are deſcribed by their *Family*, their *Diſpoſition*, their *Practice*.—What ſays eternal Wiſdom, when ſhe makes a Tender of her ineſtimable Bleſſings? *To You, O Men*, not to fallen Angels, *I call*; *and my Voice is*, not to this Man or that Man excluſively, but *to the Sons of Men* indefinitely *. Pray, have You no Relation to this Family?—What ſays the holy Apoſtle, when He publiſhes the unalterable Counſels of Heaven? *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that CHRIST JESUS came into the World to ſave*—the Upright? the Unblameable? Was this the Caſe, our Hopes would be covered with a Cloud; or rather, totally and finally eclipſed. But ſee! they are clear as the Light, and conſpicuous as the Noon-Day. For He came (chearing, charming Word!) He came to ſave *Sinners* †. Cannot You diſcern your Name in this Liſt? I am ſure, I can ſee mine written, as it were, in Capitals.

Conſonant to all which, is the Declaration of another ſacred Envoy. Who, ſpeaking of his celeſtial MASTER, ſays; *He ſuffered*—the PRINCE of Peace, the MONARCH of the Univerſe, *ſuffered*—for whom? They, in whoſe Behalf

* Prov. viii. 4. † 1 Tim. i. 15.

Behalf this matchleſs Ranſom was paid, muſt have an undeniable Right, to look upon Redemption as their own. And bleſſed, for ever bleſſed be GOD, it is moſt peremptorily ſaid, He ſuffered *for the Unjuſt* *.—Now can You ſay, That You are not comprehended in this, or the preceding Deſcriptions? Do they not reſemble and repreſent *Theron, as Face anſwers to Face in the Water?*

Theron. This I cannot deny. This is certainly true.

Aſp. That no Part of our Character might be omitted, and no Sort of our Miſery paſs unrelieved, it is farther declared; *When We were without Strength, CHRIST died for the Ungodly* †. When We were ungodly, and conſidered only as ungodly Creatures; neither poſſeſſed of any Thing amiable, nor having the leaſt Ability to acquire it; nay, when We were chargeable with horrid Guilt, and incapable of expiating a ſingle Offence; *then*, even THEN *CHRIST* died, and for ſuch abominable Wretches he died.

To ſum up the whole Evidence. Are We not of the *human* Family? Are We not, in our Spirit and Behaviour, *Sinners?* Have We not been *unjuſt* ‡ towards our Fellow-creatures, and *ungodly* towards our great CREATOR? Are We not, in all theſe Reſpects, *without Strength*, to recover Ourſelves, or make any Satisfaction for our Tranſgreſſions?—If We are (and upon theſe Queſtions, Incredulity itſelf will ſcarcely demur) let Us not

* 1 Pet. iii. 18. † Rom. v. 6.

‡ *He* is unjuſt towards his Neighbour, who neglects to love his Neighbour as *himſelf*. And if this is the Standard, who has not fallen ſhort?

frowardly reject, rather let Us thankfully receive those ſpiritual Treaſures; which, by virtue of the afore-cited Conveyance, are made over to *ſuch* People. Which, by ſeveral other Clauſes in the Will and Teſtament of our crucified LORD, evidently devolve to *ſuch* Perſons.

Ther. Is it poſſible, *Aſpaſio?* Can We be warranted and encouraged to receive theſe Treaſures, in a Capacity and under a Denomination, which I ſhould think more likely to exclude Us; diſinherit Us; and overthrow all our Pretenſions?

Aſp. This may ſeem ſtrange, but it is true. All the Bleſſings of the Goſpel proceed upon a Suppoſition of Sinfulneſs. *CHRIST* is made *Wiſdom* unto his People; but what Occaſion for the Acceſſion of Wiſdom, unleſs it be in the Caſe of Ignorance and Folly? *CHRIST* is made *Righteouſneſs*; but who can ſtand in need of a juſtifying Righteouſneſs, if they are not in themſelves unprofitable and guilty? *CHRIST* is made *Sanctification*; and does not this imply a State of Corruption to be remedied, a Body of Sin to be deſtroyed? *CHRIST* is made *Redemption*; and from what are Perſons redeemed, but from Chains and Bondage, from Miſery and Ruin, from all Manner of Evil?

It is alſo a moſt precious and invaluable Truth. Such as I would hold faſt, and never, never let go. When I ſearch for my own Endowments, I find nothing that I dare venture to plead. Being, in my beſt Moments, and amidſt my choiceſt Duties, a Sinner. As this is, at all times, my undoubted Character, I have at all times, an undoubted Warrant to ſay, The Uncreated WISDOM

calleth

calleth me: the bleſſed *JESUS* came *to ſave me*: the Great MESSIAH ſuffered Death *for me*.

Let me illuſtrate the Point.—*Romulus*, You know, the Founder of the *Roman* Empire, was a poor Prince: had but a Handful of Subjects, and very ſcanty Territories. What Expedient could He deviſe, to inlarge the Boundaries of the one, and augment the Number of the other? He iſſued a Proclamation, addreſſed to Outlaws and Criminals; all that were involved in Debt, or obnoxious to Puniſhment. Promiſing, that as many as would ſettle under his Dominion, ſhould be ſecured from Proſecution, and veſted with conſiderable Privileges.—We will ſuppoſe a Perſon in thoſe diſtreſſed Circumſtances. Upon hearing the welcome Invitation, He hangs down his Head, and with a dejected Air, cries; "I am a *Debtor*, I am a *Criminal*, "and therefore unworthy of the royal Protection." What Anſwer ſhould be made to ſuch a diſpirited Complainer? Make the ſame to Yourſelf, whenever You are inclined to renew the preſent Objections. —Remembering, that the infinite and eternal SOVEREIGN, to diſplay the Magnificence of his Majeſty, and manifeſt the Riches of his Goodneſs, has commiſſioned his Ambaſſadors to publiſh in every Nation under Heaven—"That all unhappy "Sinners, who are *oppreſſed* by the Devil and liable "to Damnation, may come to *CHRIST*. May "look upon *CHRIST* as their Ranſom and "Righteouſneſs. May, in this Manner, obtain "Pardon, Juſtification, and all the Privileges of "Children."

Ther. At this rate, the *vileſt Miſcreants* have as clear, nay have the very ſame Warrant to believe in

CHRIST, and receive his Salvation, as the higheſt Saints.

Aſp. The very ſame. In this Reſpect there is no Difference. All have ſinned, and muſt ſue for ſpiritual Bleſſings, not as deſerving, but as *guilty* Creatures; muſt receive them, not as the Recompence of their own Worth, but as the Iſſues of infinite Mercy.

The Promiſe is expreſs and unlimited, *Whoſoever* believeth in *CHRIST*, ſhall not be aſhamed. Here is no Pre-eminence of the *Jew* above the *Greek*. No Precedence given to the Man of Decency and Sobriety, before the ſhameleſs and abandoned Profligate.—This is farther confirmed by undoubted Fact. St. *Peter*, ſpeaking of the vileſt Miſcreants, ſays; *GOD gave them the HOLY GHOST, even as He did unto Us; and put no Difference between Us and them* *. They were altogether as welcome to *CHRIST* and his Salvation, as We the Apoſtles of the LORD.

Should You aſk the higheſt Saints, On what their Hopes are grounded? This, or ſomething to this Effect, would be their Reply—"On the "Grant of *CHRIST* and his Salvation, moſt "clearly ſet forth, in the Scriptures of Truth. "There We hear it declared; *Unto You*, though "Gentiles and Idolaters, *is preached the Remiſſion "of Sins* †. As a Bleſſing procured by *CHRIST*, "and now preſented to your Souls, on the ſame "Terms as Light is preſented to your Eyes.— "There We ſee it recorded; *This Man receiveth "Sinners* ‡. Yes; He, who is GOD and Man "in one *CHRIST*, openeth his Arms; open-"eth

* Acts xv. 8, 9. † Acts xiii. 38. ‡ Luke xv. 2.

" eth his Heart; and receiveth Sinners, to a Par-
" ticipation of Himſelf and his heavenly Riches.
" Receiveth thoſe Sinners, who were not only the
" Scorn of Phariſaical Pride, but the very Diſ-
" grace of human Nature.—There We read the
" following Decree, iſſued from the Court of Hea-
" ven, and regiſtered for the Comfort of a guilty
" World. *The Promiſe*, relating to Forgiveneſs
" of Sins and the SPIRIT of Grace, *is to You.*
" Though You have perſecuted and murthered the
" *LORD JESUS*, You may, without any
" Scruple or Delay, apply it to Yourſelves. Nay,
" more; You may carry it home *to your Children*,
" and bid them be Sharers of the Bleſſing. It is
" an unſearchable Treaſure, which You may free-
" ly enjoy; and an ineſtimable Portion, which
" they may as freely inherit. What is more graci-
" ous ſtill; it is *to all that are afar off*: whether
" literally afar off, by living in remote heathen
" Climes; or ſpiritually afar off, by deeply revolt-
" ing from their Duty. In ſhort; it is *to as many*
" *as the LORD our GOD*, by the Preaching
" of his moſt bleſſed Goſpel, *ſhall call* *."

Ther.

* *Acts* ii. 39. It has been objected, That the Paſſage produced by *Aſpaſio*, does not exactly ſuit his Purpoſe. " Becauſe, the People, to whom the Apoſtle ſpeaks, " were, not the Congregation in general, but thoſe par- " ticular Hearers, who were *pricked in their Hearts*; that " is, were endued with godly Sorrow, and ſavingly " changed."

To which I reply, by putting a Query upon the Objection, and lodging a Caveat againſt the Interpretation, —Firſt for the Objection; " The People, to whom the " Apoſtle ſpeaks, were, not the Congregation in gene- " ral, but thoſe particular Hearers, who were pricked

Ther. This is a pleaſing Suppoſition. But it would be more ſatisfactory, if You ſhould refer me to

" in their Hearts." Does the Apoſtle addreſs himſelf to thoſe *only?* I think not. I hope not. Becauſe, this would repreſent the Gifts of GOD, as depending on ſome Qualifications in Man. Conſequently, would deſtroy the Freeneſs of the Gift, and eclipſe the Glory of Grace. Whereas, if We ſuppoſe the Promiſe addreſſed to Sinners, as Sinners, without any Thing to diſtinguiſh one from another; then, all is perfectly free, and Grace ſhines forth in its native Luſtre.—The Promiſe is extended to the whole Audience, *every One of You.* To *their Children*; Their Children that were at Home; Their Children that were unborn; Their Children of the lateſt Generations. And theſe, I preſume, could neither be pricked in their Hearts, nor ſavingly changed.—Beſides; it ſeems plain, from the Courſe of the Narrative, that the Addreſs is directed, not to any ſelect Number, but to the promiſcuous Multitude. For, the diſcriminating Sentence follows in Verſe 41. *Then they*, amongſt this promiſcuous Multitude, *that gladly received his Word, were baptized.*

" *Were pricked in the Heart*; that is, were endued " with godly Sorrow, and ſavingly changed." Againſt this Interpretation I am to lodge a Caveat.—*Cain*, and *Saul*, and *Judas*, Κατενυγησαν τη καρδια, were pricked in Heart. They had Stings of Anguiſh in their Conſciences, and the Dagger of Diſtreſs in their Souls. Yet none ever imagined, that they were truly converted.—Theſe People were ignorant of *CHRIST* and the Way of Salvation. *What ſhall We do?* implies their Want of this neceſſary Knowledge. They did not ſo much as ſee the Place of Refuge; therefore, could not be arrived at it. Could not be ſafe, or ſavingly changed.—Not to multiply Arguments. The Apoſtle muſt certainly be the beſt Judge of his Hearers State, and the beſt Expoſitor of his own Meaning. Did *He* conſider this Circumſtance in ſo advantageous a Light? No; He neither regards it, as conſtituting the Grace of Repentance, nor ſpringing from the promiſed Gift of the

HOLY

to any of the Saints, actually ſpeaking in this Manner?

Aſp. Iſaiah, You will allow, was a Saint of no inferior Rank. Yet He breathes the Spirit I am deſcribing, and acts the Part I am vindicating. Turn to that Epitome of the Goſpel, his *fifty-third* Chapter. There You may obſerve Him, claiming a Share in the greateſt of all Privileges, Salvation through the Blood of *CHRIST*. How does He advance and maintain his Claim? Not in the Capacity of a *ſanctified*, but under the Character of a *ſinful* Perſon. Theſe are his Words; *The LORD hath laid on him*, on his Son *CHRIST JESUS*, *the Iniquity of Us all* *. Of me, and of my Brethren in Piety, does He mean? No; but of me, and of my Fellow-tranſgreſſors. This is evidently implied

HOLY GHOST; it was not Faith in *CHRIST* for the Remiſſion of Sins, neither was it a Pledge of Security from the Wrath, which was coming on that untoward Generation. This is evident from his own Words—*Repent—for the Remiſſion—Ye ſhall receive—Save Yourſelves.* A Way of ſpeaking, which ſuppoſes thoſe, whom He addreſſes, to be deſtitute of the Bleſſings mentioned.

This, if I miſtake not, is the Truth of the Caſe. Theſe People, convinced of their horrible Wickedneſs in crucifying the SON of GOD, were filled with the moſt alarming Apprehenſions. As yet, they had no Notion of a divine REDEEMER, dying for his *very Murderers*. They were, therefore, under what ſome Writers call, a Law-Work. And can the Law, which worketh Wrath, produce a ſaving Change, or rather the Change which accompanieth Salvation? This would take away the Honours of *CHRIST*, and transfer them to *Moſes?* This would confound the Letter which killeth, with the Spirit that giveth Life.

* Iſai. liii. 6.

plied in the Clauſe I have quoted. In the preceding Part of the Verſe, the Prophet explains Himſelf, and leaves no Room for Heſitation. *All We, like Sheep, have gone aſtray; We have turned every One to his own Ways.* Yet *our* Tranſgreſſions, *our* Iniquities, the GOD of all Mercy has transferred from us, and charged upon his beloved SON.—As the vileſt Miſcreants are indiſpenſibly obliged to confeſs the former, they have an apparent Right to profeſs, to aſſert, and to believe the latter.

Ther. The vileſt Miſcreants have *a Right*—an *apparent* Right to believe—to believe that all *their* Sins are laid upon *CHRIST!* This is ſurpriſing Doctrine. I know not how to credit it, though You take ſo much Pains to eſtabliſh it.

Aſp. It puts me in Mind of that memorable Prediction, recorded by *Habakkuk*, and quoted by *Peter*. *Behold! I work a Work*, of ſuch immenſely rich and inconceivably free Goodneſs, *that You ſhall not believe, even though a Man declare it unto You.*—The LORD, I truſt, who opened *Hagar*'s Eyes, to diſcern the Fountain of Water, for the Refreſhment of her Son, will open my Friend's Eyes, to diſcern this infinitely more precious Fountain, for the Conſolation of his Soul.

O the Riches, the unſearchable Riches of the Kindneſs and Love of GOD! He makes a Grant of *CHRIST* and his heavenly Kingdom, to the moſt contemptible Wretches on the Face of the Earth; yea, to the moſt deteſtable Creatures on this Side Hell!—At this You wonder. At this We ought all to wonder. This will be the Wonder of Saints and Angels, through a boundleſs Eternity. Yet though We wonder, let Us not gainſay nor

nor murmur. Let not the Creature refuſe the Bounty of the CREATOR, becauſe it is unutterably great. Neither let the elder Brother repine, becauſe the young Prodigal enters at the ſame Door, and is admitted to the ſame Table with Himſelf.

I have alledged the Teſtimony of the Saints, let me add the Deciſion of their King. *GOD ſo loved the World*, even that World, which, the Apoſtle *John* aſſures Us, is not only fallen, but lieth in Wickedneſs. Yet, fallen and apoſtate as it is, GOD ſo loved it, *that He gave his only begotten SON*, to bring in a perfect Righteouſneſs, and obtain eternal Redemption.

Ther. But the Queſtion is, For whom?

Aſp. For the World moſt certainly. None elſe, Nothing elſe, is mentioned. It is not ſaid, For the choiceſt Part of the World; its beſt Inhabitants, picked and culled from the Refuſe. But for the corrupt and vicious World, theſe Things are given. That, being believed and accepted, they may be ſaving Health to their Souls.

Ther. "For the World *."—Does this general Form of Expreſſion warrant any One, to make a particular Application of *CHRIST* and all his Benefits, to Himſelf?

Aſp. Pray do You find any Reſtriction of the Grant? Is any Exception made, relating to this or that particular Set of Men? Is not the Extent of the Gift as wide as the World? If ſo, it warrants any One, it authorizes every One †, to make

* John vi. 51.

† If there were any Man, to whom the Grant of a SAVIOUR, did not particularly belong; that Perſon

make a ſpecial Application of *CHRIST* to Himſelf.

In other Inſtances, ſuch a general Expreſſion, not only warrants, but produces a particular Application. When *Jonah*, in purſuance of the divine Command, *cried and ſaid*; *Yet forty Days, and Nineveh ſhall be overthrown.* Here was no particular Mention of Man, Woman, or Child. Neither the King, nor the Nobles, nor the Commons were ſpecified. Much leſs was each and every Inhabitant threatened by Name. Nevertheleſs, this general Denunciation alarmed them all; was influential on them all. Inſomuch that *the People of Nineveh believed GOD, and proclaimed a Faſt, and put on Sackcloth, from the greateſt of them even to the leaſt* *. —*They believed*; hence We learn the true Nature of Believing. "GOD ſpeaks to *me*; and what "he ſpeaks, He will perform;" is its genuine Profeſſion. Hence We likewiſe diſcover, *who* they are which ought, in this Manner to apply the general Word; *all, from the leaſt even unto the greateſt.*

Ther. The Caſe is not parallel, *Aſpaſio.* This was a Denunciation of Vengeance, not a Promiſe of Grace.

Aſp. And can You, *Theron*, can You ſuppoſe? That GOD is more liberal of Vengeance, than He is communicative of Grace. Vengeance is his ſtrange Work, but in Mercy and Loving-kindneſs He delighteth.—Are We bound to believe and apply his dreadful Threatenings? Not allowed to believe

ſon would have no Warrant to believe; He would do right in diſbelieving; what the Scriptures repreſent as the greateſt Sin, would become his bounden Duty.

* Jonah iii. 5.

believe and apply his precious Promiſes? Surely, the LORD's Ways are not ſo unequal.—When the Law ſays, *Curſed is every One, that continueth not in all Things* *; ſhould not every Hearer take this to Himſelf, and ſubmit to the Sentence of juſt Condemnation? When the Goſpel ſays, *HE came to ſave that which is loſt* †; ſhould not every Hearer take this alſo to himſelf, and embrace the Tender of free Salvation?

However, if You diſlike this Inſtance, I will give You another; which is not of the vindictive, but of the beneficent Kind.—When the *Manna* made its firſt Appearance in the Wilderneſs; when the *Iſraelites* knew, neither what it was, nor for whom intended; both theſe Particulars were explained by *Moſes*. *This is the Bread which the LORD hath given You to eat* ‡. No Mention is made of any individual Perſon. Yet the whole Congregation, looked upon this as an undoubted Permiſſion, both for themſelves and their Children, to gather, to fetch home, and to uſe the miraculous Food.

Ther. GOD gave the *Manna* to all the *Iſraelites*, both good and bad. But does He give *CHRIST* with this unlimited Freeneſs?

Aſp. Our LORD Himſelf, alluding to this very Miracle, vouchſafes You an Anſwer. *My FATHER giveth You the true Bread from Heaven* ‖. The Language is nearly the ſame as *Moſes* uſed; and it expreſſes the very ſame unlimited Freeneſs. —My FATHER giveth You his incarnate SON, and his divinely excellent Righteouſneſs. Theſe

* Gal. iii. 10. † Matt. xviii. 11. ‡ Exod. xvi. 15.
‖ John vi. 32.

Theſe are Bread indeed; Bread, which came down from the Regions of Heaven; and Bread, which nouriſheth the Soul for the Joys of Heaven.—This my FATHER *giveth You*; though not in actual Poſſeſſion, yet in Right to poſſeſs. This He giveth You *, by Way of free indefinite Grant. Without which, any Attempt to poſſeſs, even in the moſt upright of Men, would be illegal and preſumptuous. By virtue of which Grant, the Bad as well as the Good—it is your own Expreſſion, and therefore I make Uſe of it. Though, in Reality, None are good, till they receive *CHRIST*. Which, were his Benefits of the excluſive Sort, would be Cauſe of infinite Anxiety to Mankind. But our great Conſolation is, that One as well as Another, the idolatrous *Gentile* as well as the profeſſing *Iſraelite*, has an unqueſtionable Warrant to claim them for Himſelf.

Ther. Unqueſtionable! Is not this Expreſſion too peremptory? That ſuch a Grant ſhould be made to *Believers*, I can eaſily conceive. But is it made to Sinners—to any Sinners—to the moſt abandoned Sinners?

Aſp. Yes, *Theron*, to Sinners. And when Sinners receive the Grant, then they commence Believers. —Was it made to Believers only, no Man living would inherit the Bleſſing. Becauſe all Men are, by the Depravity and Impotence of their Nature, originally concluded under Sin and Unbelief. It is therefore,

* "The *Receiving* of *CHRIST* neceſſarily preſuppoſes this *Giving* of Him. There may indeed be a Giving, where there is no Receiving; for a Gift may be refuſed. There may alſo be a *Taking*, where there is no Giving; which is a preſumptuous Action, without Warrant. But there can be no Place for receiving *CHRIST*, where there is not a Giving of Him before." *Boſton*'s Notes.

fore, a Source of Comfort and a Store-houſe of Relief, for the moſt guilty Creatures, even in their moſt deſperate Circumſtances.

What ſaid our *LORD JESUS?* My Father giveth *You*; that is, the People who ſtood around, and heard his gracious Voice. Many of whom were in a carnal State habitually, and even then were in a murmuring wicked Frame *.—What ſays his Prophet? He cries out in a Rapture; O my loſt Brethren, *to* Us *a Child is born*; *to* Us *a Son is given!* Not to Us, who were regenerate, and become Children of Light. But to Us Children of fallen *Adam*; to Us undone Sinners of Mankind; who *walked in Darkneſs, and dwelt in the Shadow of Death* †.—What ſaith GOD the LORD? He that created the Heavens, and ſtretched them out? *I will give Thee*, meaning his beloved SON, *for a Covenant*; it is not ſaid, of Believers, but *of the People*; it is not ſaid, of new Creatures, but *of the Gentiles:* Who were the vileſt of all Creatures, or, as You have properly ſpoke, the moſt abandoned Sinners.

That we may underſtand more clearly the Signification of theſe Terms, and ſee the true Extent of this Gift, it is added; I will give Thee *to open the blind Eyes, and to bring out the Priſoners from the Priſon* ‡. Miſerable and guilty Wretches, blinded by the Devil, and enſlaved to their Luſts; theſe are not ſet aſide. Nay; theſe are expreſsly named. They are the very *Patentees* in the heavenly Grant. An obedient and a dying SAVIOUR is as much given to them, that they may receive Him, and be ſaved; as the City of Refuge was appointed for the Manſlayer, that He might fly thither, and be ſecure;

or

* John vi. 25, 41. † Iſai. ix. 2, 6. ‡ Iſai. xlii. 6, 7.

or as the brazen Serpent was lifted up on a Pole, that the wounded *Iſraelite* might look to it, and be healed.

Here then the Grant and the Gift are mentioned; the Perſons, to whom the Grant is made, and for whom the Gift is provided, are ſpecified. They are Sinners; *blinded* and *enſlaved* Sinners; or, if there be any other more obnoxious Sort, they are all comprehended in this one Word, *Gentiles*. Only allow the divine Speaker to be ſincere; then We ſhall ſee, in theſe precious Texts, a moſt chearing Hope even for for the vileſt Sinners. Hope, that they may be juſtified, eſcape the Curſe, and find Favour with GOD. Nay; We may boldly affirm; That, proceeding on theſe Words of the eternal KING, even the vileſt Sinner is allowed, is authorized to ſay; "GOD gives me his SON, "to be my Covenant Surety. I take Him at his "Word. The SURETY and all his Merits, "and all his Benefits, are mine."

Divinely rich Bounty! Enough to charm and aſtoniſh the Univerſe. But not too great for the infinite JEHOVAH to exerciſe. O, let Us not refuſe what, on this Conſideration, the unerring SPIRIT calls *our own Mercy* *. Let Us adore the Beneficence of our GOD. Let Us believe his promiſing Word. And, in this ſweet, this eaſy Manner, obtain both preſent and final Salvation.

Ther. I have one Scruple more, which, at this Inſtant, ariſes in my Mind. *The Righteouſneſs of CHRIST*, according to the Apoſtle, *is upon all that* believe. Therefore, it is not the Sinner's, but the Believer's Portion.

Aſp. If this was true, ſure the Goſpel, which reveals this Righteouſneſs, could not be glad Tidings.

* Jonah ii. 8.

ings. I will ſuppoſe a Congregation of ignorant and ungodly People, of Heathens and Idolaters. The Miniſter lifts his Voice and cries; "The "Righteouſneſs of GOD the SAVIOUR is "not for You. You are not Believers, and there- "fore have no Right to receive the Bleſſing."—What a diſcouraging, nay, what a killing Meſſage!—Whereas, if the Ambaſſador of *CHRIST* makes this Proclamation; "I know, You are an Aſſem- "bly of vile and abominable Sinners. Neverthe- "leſs, I am commiſſioned to preach glad Tidings "to You. The infinitely glorious SON has died "for ſuch Tranſgreſſors as You. And the infinite- "ly gracious FATHER freely offers his perfect "Righteouſneſs to You." This is indeed a joyful Sound.

Beſides, *Theron*, You don't attend to the Apoſtle's Expreſſion. He ſays, the Righteouſneſs of GOD *is upon* all them that believe. Such Perſons actually poſſeſs it. They wear the Robe. They are cloathed with Salvation. And here lies the Difference between the vile Miſcreant and the real Saint. Not that one was originally better than the other: not that one has a clearer Grant of *CHRIST* than the other: but the latter has put on the Wedding-garment, and uſes it to his unſpeakable Honour and Happineſs; the former is admoniſhed to throw aſide his filthy Rags, and invited to put on this heavenly Raiment.

Ther. Let me recollect—*CHRIST* is given for the World, the apoſtate World, to believe on—*CHRIST* has died, not for the Righteous, but for the Ungodly—*CHRIST* came in the Fleſh to ſave Sinners, even the chief of Sinners.—Well, *Aſ-*

paſſio, if theſe Things are true (and how can they be otherwiſe? ſince they are the expreſs Doctrine of Scripture) it is pity, but they were more generally known. For my part, I muſt confeſs, they are not only new, but ſtrange to me. Though I have read them in the Bible, yet when I come to conſider them, and compare them with what paſſes in my Breaſt, I find they are quite contrary to my uſual Ways of thinking.

Aſp. You remind me of a valuable Perſon, whom I once numbered among my Acquaintance, and whoſe Way of thinking ſomewhat reſembled your own. Will You give me leave to relate his Caſe?

Ther. Moſt gladly. It will be ſome Kind of Conſolation to hear, that Others have laboured under the ſame Difficulties with myſelf, and been ſubject to the ſame Diſtreſſes. If I am informed of their *Deliverance* from thoſe Diſtreſſes, it will be like ſhewing me an opened Door, for effecting my own Eſcape. If I am likewiſe acquainted with the *Manner* of their Deliverance, this will furniſh me with a Clue to guide my Steps.

Aſp. This Perſon was rouſed from a Habit of Indolence and Supineneſs, into a ſerious Concern for his eternal Welfare. Convinced of his depraved Nature and aggravated Guilt, He had recourſe to the Scriptures, and to frequent Prayer. He attended the Ordinances of Chriſtianity, and ſought earneſtly for an *aſſured Intereſt* in *CHRIST*. But found no ſtedfaſt Faith, and taſted very little Comfort. At length, He applied to an eminent Divine, and laid open the State of his Heart. Short, but weighty, was the Anſwer he received. "I perceive, Sir, "the Cauſe of all your Diſtreſs. You do not,

"you

"you will not, come to *CHRIST as a Sinner*. "This Miſtake ſtands between your Soul and the "Joy of Religion. This detains you in the Gall "of Bitterneſs; and take heed, O! take heed, "leſt it conſign you over to the Bond of Iniquity." This Admonition never departed from the Gentleman's Mind; and it became a happy Means of removing the Obſtructions to his Peace.

Remember this little Hiſtory, *Theron*; and may it prove as efficacious for your Good, as it is pertinent to your Circumſtances! Remember, that the free Grant of *CHRIST*, made in the Word of Truth, and addreſſed to Sinners of Mankind, is the only Baſis and Ground-work of Faith. An Apoſtle, after all the Labours of his exemplary Life, can have no better. And a *Magdalene* or a *Manaſſeh*, as a Motive and Encouragement for their turning to the LORD, have the very ſame.

But we digreſs from the principal Subject. Since You diſapprove *my* Account of Faith, I muſt deſire You to favour me with a Deſcription, more correct and unexceptionable. For, as You juſtly obſerved, this is a *very momentous* Article.—Is not *CHRIST* the Source of all ſpiritual Good, and Faith the main Channel of Conveyance? Surely then it ſhould be made and kept, as clear as poſſible.—Is not *CHRIST* the Foundation of all true Godlineſs, and Faith the Maſter-arch in this ſacred Structure? Surely then it ſhould be raiſed and turned, with the utmoſt Care.

DIALOGUE XVII.

THERON.

PALÆMON's Account is this—*Faith*, He ſays, is a firm Perſuaſion, that *JESUS CHRIST* has ſhed his Blood, and fulfilled all Righteouſneſs; has ſuſtained the Puniſhment due to Sin, and obtained full Reconciliation with GOD. That all this Grace, and each of theſe Benefits, are free, perfectly free; for You, for me, for others. In conſequence of this Perſuaſion, the Sinner flies to *CHRIST*, comes to *CHRIST*, and truſts in *CHRIST* for his own Salvation.

Aſp. I have the higheſt Regard for *Palæmon*'s Judgment; and I cannot but think, my Opinion is confirmed even by his.—The Act of *flying* to *CHRIST*, implies an Intention to get out of Danger; it implies a Diſcovery of *CHRIST*, as the appointed Safety; and conſiſts in making Uſe of Him as ſuch. When the Manſlayer fled to the City of Refuge, He made Uſe of that privileged Place for his own Protection. How can this be done,

done, with regard to a bleeding, dying SAVIOUR, but only by a Perſuaſion that He *is mine?* That his Sufferings were in *my* Stead, and that his Death is *my* Safe-guard.—What is meant by *Coming* to *CHRIST*, We may learn from *Jeremiah*. *Behold! We come unto Thee, for Thou art the LORD our GOD.* Coming, You ſee, includes or proceeds upon a real Perſuaſion, that the LORD is *our* GOD. While We are wholly deſtitute of this Perſuaſion, We ſtand at a Diſtance, and our Souls are afar off. We are never brought nigh; We never come in the Prophet's Senſe; till We are taught to ſay, each One for Himſelf, *Thou art the LORD my GOD* *.—The Act of *Truſting* in *CHRIST* is much of the ſame Nature. It preſuppoſes, that *CHRIST* is the Truſtee of the Covenant of Grace; it proceeds upon a Conviction of his Faithfulneſs in executing the Office; and it is a ſolemn Surrendering or Giving up the whole Affair of our Salvation into his Hand. Giving it up, not in

* *Jer.* iii. 22. This Text relates to the backſliding *Iſraelites*. It is obſervable, that they do not lay Claim to the LORD as their GOD, becauſe they are Penitents. But are encouraged to return, from the bare Belief of his gracious Declarations. The Return of the Children of GOD, after backſliding, is of the ſame Nature and proceeds upon the ſame Grounds, as their firſt Approach. According to that invariable Rule, *As Ye have received CHRIST JESUS the LORD, ſo walk Ye in Him.*

This Doctrine is taught, and repreſented under the the ſame Image, *Iſai.* xlv. 24. *To HIM ſhall Men come.* What does this figurative Expreſſion ſignify? The Prophet himſelf anſwers our Queſtion, and explains his own Meaning. *Surely, ſhall one ſay, in the LORD have I Righteouſneſs.* When People believe this in their Heart, and profeſs this with their Mouth, *then* they come unto the LORD.

Uncertainty of Succeſs (this would be *miſtruſting*, rather than truſting) but with a Certainty, in ſome meaſure, ſuitable to the Fidelity and Ability of HIM, with whom We have to do.

If You ſtill are doubtful, whether any ſuch Perſuaſion is implied in *Truſting*, let Us chooſe a Referee. Let Us carry our Controverſy to the King of *Iſrael*. Inquire of *David*, why He truſts in the LORD, and what he means by truſting? To both theſe Inquiries He anſwers diſtinctly and fully. "*The* "*LORD is my high Tower, my Shield, and He in* "*whom I truſt* *. He *is* a Shield—He is *my* Shield "—Of this I am perſuaded, and *therefore* I truſt in "him: or this I believe, and in *ſo doing*, I truſt on "Him."

Ther. This Air of *Aſſurance*, which runs through all your Repreſentations of Faith, appears ſomewhat preſumptuous in my Eye. It is as if People pretended to know and claim their Seat in Heaven, before the Judgment Day.

Aſp.

* *Pſal.* cxliv. 2. See alſo *Pſal.* xxxi. 14. *Iſai.* xii. 2, and eſpecially 2 *Kings* xviii. 30. Where *Rabſhakeh*, the *Aſſyrian* General, gives Us an Expoſition of the Word *truſt*. This Man, unacquainted with theological Controverſies and nice Diſtinctions; having no other Information, but what was derived from common Senſe, and the common Principles of Mankind; ſees all that We contend for, comprehended in the Expreſſion, *Let not Hezekiah make You truſt in the LORD, ſaying, The LORD will ſurely deliver Us.* To truſt in the LORD, is, according to this *abnormis Sapiens*, to *ſay* from the Heart, and declare with the Mouth—The LORD *will* deliver—He will deliver *Us*—He will *ſurely* deliver Us.—Muſt it not be a Shame to Chriſtians, if they have meaner Apprehenſions of truſting in JEHOVAH, than a Heathen and an Idolater.

Asp. And is this so strange or presumptuous a Thing? In former Ages, People made no Scruple to declare; *We* know, *that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, We have a Building of GOD, a House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.* And these are People, whom You need not blush to be like, nor be afraid to copy after.

The *Papists*, I own, take great Offence at the Word Assurance, and utterly explode the Doctrine *. But they are no infallible Guides, for Us to follow; neither are they very inviting Patterns, for Us to imitate. You and I, *Theron*, cannot reasonably be offended, at the Expression, or the Doctrine; if We recollect what We have been taught, in the first Stage of Life, and what is professed, in the last Scene of Mortality. We are taught, even from our Infancy, that the Sacrament of the LORD's Supper, is not only a Sign of Spiritual Grace, but a Pledge to *assure* Us thereof †. At the Interment of the Dead, We profess our *sure* and certain Hope of a Resurrection to eternal Life ‡. That this is always applied, with due Propriety, in our Burial-Service, I will not venture to assert.

* One of their unrighteous Decrees, established by the Council of *Trent*, is; "If any shall say, that justify-"ing Faith is nothing else, but a Confidence or Assu-"rance of the Mercy of GOD, pardoning Sins for "*CHRIST*'s Sake, let Him be accursed."—Must We not call the Assembly, which could pass such horrible Doctrine into a Law, *the Synagogue of Satan?* Ought We not to expostulate, with such a dogmatizing and damning Spirit, in the Words of the Apostle? *O full of all Subtilty and all Mischief, thou Child of the Devil, thou Enemy of all Righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right Ways of the LORD?* Acts xiii. 10.

† *Church Catechism.* ‡ *Burial-Office.*

That it ſufficiently countenances my Sentiments, None will undertake to deny. If this countenances, the Apoſtle authorizes them; when He addreſſes Us, with this very remarkable Exhortation; *Having therefore, Brethren, Boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt by the Blood of JESUS, let Us draw near with a true Heart in* full Aſſurance *of Faith* *; with a firm Perſuaſion of Acceptance; with a certain Expectation of Succeſs.

After all, if You diſlike the Word Aſſurance, We will change it for the more ſoftened, and more modeſtly-ſounding Term, *Appropriation*.—St. *Chryſoſtom* ſays, Η πιστις ιδιοποιειται του Θεου· which is tranſlated and expounded by a pious Divine of our own; "Faith, He tells Us, is a Work of the "HOLY GHOST in the Soul, enabling it "to appropriate the Blood and Righteouſneſs of "*JESUS CHRIST*, for the Remiſſion of Sin, "and its Juſtification unto eternal Life."

Ther. You change Aſſurance for a more ſoftened, not for a more intelligible Term. I muſt deſire to know, what You mean by the Word Appropriation.

Aſp. To appropriate, in the theological Senſe, is to take home the Grace of GOD; or apply to One's Self, what lies in the common indefinite Grant of the Goſpel. Is *CHRIST* the Treaſure hid in the Field? To appropriate this Treaſure, is to receive and uſe it as our own Portion. Is *CHRIST* the Balm of *Gilead*, full of ſaving Health? To appropriate this Balm, is to take and apply it for the Recovery of our own Souls. And without ſuch an Appropriation, how can We either

* Heb. x. 19, 20.

either be enriched by the former, or healed by the latter?

Let me farther explain my Meaning, and exemplify the Poſition, by conſidering *CHRIST* in his ſeveral Offices. *CHRIST*, as a Prieſt, is made to guilty Creatures Righteouſneſs. When We appropriate the Grace of our great HIGH PRIEST, this is the Language of our Hearts, *In the LORD have I Righteouſneſs**.—*CHRIST*, as a Prophet, is made to ignorant Creatures Wiſdom. When We appropriate the Benefits of our unerring PROPHET, this is the Perſuaſion of our Souls, *Tho' I ſit in Darkneſs, the LORD will be a Light unto me* †.—*CHRIST*, as a King, is made unto depraved Creatures Sanctification. When We appropriate the Munificence of our Almighty KING, this is our comfortable Truſt, *The LORD will deliver me from every evil Work* ‡.

Ther. The Scripture never uſes the Term *Appropriation.* Will it not draw off our Attention from the Form of ſound Words, left Us by the Apoſtle? Will it not lead Us into a Strife about Phraſes, deviſed by human Wiſdom? Perhaps, bewilder Us among Oppoſitions of Science, falſely ſo called? Some Perſons, You muſt be ſenſible, have affirmed; That it is enough to know the Truth, and believe what *JESUS* has done. According to that which is written; *By his Knowledge ſhall my righteous Servant juſtify many.*

Aſp. Do You experience this to be enough, *Theron?* Is this ſufficient to diſpel your Fears, and calm your

* Iſai. xlv. 24. † Mic. vii. 8. ‡ 2 Tim. iv. 18.

your Conſcience? Does this comfort your Heart, and fill You with all Joy?

The ſcriptural Knowledge; that which the HOLY GHOST teaches; is of the appropriating Kind. And if the Doctrine be contained in Scripture, it ſhould ſeem an over-refined Scrupuloſity to cavil with the Diction.

By his Knowledge ſhall my righteous Servant juſtify many. That is, by the Knowledge of Him, as our Atonement, and our Redemption; *who was wounded for our Sins, and bruiſed for our Iniquities.* Thus the Prophet expounds his own Text; and lends Us a Clue, that may lead Us into our LORD's Meaning, when He declares; *This is Life eternal, that they may know Thee the only true GOD, and JESUS CHRIST whom Thou haſt ſent.* That they may know Thee, O GOD, as completely reconciled, and infinitely gracious to them. That they may know *JESUS CHRIST*, as the ſole Cauſe of this bleſſed Reconciliation; by ſatisfying Juſtice, and bringing in an everlaſting Righteouſneſs.

This is conſonant to that general Maxim, laid down by the Apoſtle, *We have known and believed*—What? That GOD is Love? This is Part of the Truth, but not the whole.—That He exerciſes it freely, and with overflowing Abundance? Neither does this come up to the Meaſure of the Believer's Knowledge.—But We have known and believed *the* ſpecial, the diſtinguiſhing *Love, which GOD hath towards Us*, in *JESUS CHRIST*, —This is the Knowledge, which juſtifies the Ungodly, and ſanctifies the Sinner. In this Knowledge, You ſee, there is an Application to Ourſelves;

ſelves; a Belief that the Bleſſing is our own; or, in other Words, an Appropriation, *Towards Us.*

Ther. So then an Application to Ourſelves, or a Belief that the Bleſſings of the Goſpel are our own, is what You mean by Appropriation.

Aſp. Add, our own by Virtue of the divine Grant, and this is my very Meaning. That an Appropriation of this Kind is included in the Eſſence of Faith, is the Sentiment I would maintain.—Which Sentiment might be confirmed, if ſuch Confirmation were demanded, by a Multitude of the moſt illuſtrious Witneſſes. Witneſſes ſo *illuſtrious*, that they were a Bleſſing to the World, and an Honour to human Nature. So *numerous*, that, without giving an Abſtract of their Teſtimonies, it might ſeem tedious only to recite their Names *.

Ther.

* If the Reader ſhould inquire after their Names, He will find *ſome* of them enumerated in the following Catalogue. *Luther, Calvin, Melanćthon, Beza, Bullinger, Bucer, Knox, Craig, Melvil, Bruce, Davidſon, Forbes,* &c. —*Urſinus, Zanchius, Junius, Piſcator, Rollock, Danæus, Wendelinus, Chamierus, Sharpius, Bodius, Pareus, Altingius, Triglandii* (*Giſbertus* & *Jacobus*), *Arnoldus, Mareſius*; the four Profeſſors at *Leyden, Wallæus, Rivetus, Polyander, Thyſius*; *Wollebius, Heideggerus, Eſſenius, Turretinus,* &c.—Many eminent *Britiſh* Divines, Biſhop *Babington, Davenant, Hall*; Mr. *Perkins, Pemble, Willet, Gouge, Rogers, Burgeſs, Owen, Marſhal,* &c.

If we were apparently and demonſtrably in an Error, yet, to err with ſuch Company, and in the Footſteps of ſuch Guides, muſt very much tend to mitigate the Severity of Cenſure. But, I believe, few ſerious Perſons will venture to charge Error and Deluſion upon ſuch a venerable Body of Proteſtant Divines; ſo eminent for their Learning; ſo exemplary for their Holineſs; and whoſe Labours were ſo remarkably owned by GOD.

Ther. I will diſpenſe with your Recital of t Names, only let me have a Specimen of their T monies.

Aſp. Firſt, let me preſent You with Dr. *Ou* than whom *England* has produced few Writ either more judicious or more devout. "Fai "He tells Us in his *Catechiſm*, is a gracious Reſti "upon the free Promiſes of GOD in *JESU* "*CHRIST* for Mercy, with a *firm Perſuaſion* "Heart, that GOD *is* a reconciled Father to *I* "in the SON of his Love."

Next, let me introduce an Author of Renown from our Siſter Country, *Scotland*. Mr. *Davidſon* aſking, "What is that Faith, which is the only "Inſtrument of this ſtrait Conjunction between "*CHRIST* crucified and Us?" Teaches his Diſciple to reply; "It is the *ſure Perſuaſion* of the "Heart, that *CHRIST*, by his Death and Re- "ſurrection, *hath taken* away *our* Sins; and cloath- "ing Us with his own Righteouſneſs, has thorough- "ly reſtored Us to the Favour of GOD."

To theſe I would add the learned and juſtly celebrated *Altingius*, Profeſſor of Divinity at *Heidelberg*. "Faith, He ſays, is a Knowledge of the Grace of "GOD in *CHRIST*, together with a fiduciary "Reliance on it, or an *Application* of it to a Man's "*own Self*."

Theſe Teſtimonies are but as the Tythe to the whole Crop. Yet theſe are more than enough to exempt me from the Charge of Singularity. You will not wonder therefore, if I ſtill abide by the good old Doctrine, which is eſpouſed by ſo many of the ableſt Judges; which was the darling Tenet of almoſt all our Reformers; and which is the

avowed

avowed Belief, not of a few ſingle Perſons only, but of many famous Proteſtant Churches.

Ther. Pray let me hear, what the Proteſtant Churches ſay. Their Teſtimony, though not infallible, is doubtleſs very conſiderable.

Aſp. The Teſtimony of the *Engliſh* Church is already produced. You ſhall now have the Declaration of the Church of *Scotland*. In her national Covenant, She has theſe memorable Words; "We "deteſt and refuſe the uſurped Authority of that "*Roman* Antichriſt, his *general* and *doubtſome* Faith." From which Words We naturally draw theſe two Concluſions—That, ſince the *Popiſh* Faith is a doubtſome Faith, the *Proteſtant* Faith is an aſſured Faith —That, ſince the *Popiſh* Faith is a general one, the *Proteſtant* Faith muſt needs be a Faith of ſpecial Application.

Now let Us hear the unanimous Suffrage of the Churches of the *Palatinate*. It is enquired, in the twenty-firſt Queſtion of their public *Catechiſm*, "What is true Faith?" To which this Anſwer is returned. "It is not only an Aſſent to all the "Truths, which GOD has revealed in his Word; "but it is an *aſſured* Truſt, wrought by the HOLY "SPIRIT in my Heart, that Remiſſion of Sins, "compleat Righteouſneſs, and eternal Life are "given; freely given, not to others only, but "to *myſelf*; and all this, from the mere Mer- "cy of GOD, through the alone Merits of "*CHRIST*."

Omitting the Confeſſions of ſeveral other foreign Churches, I ſhall only ſubjoin the Doctrine of the *Dutch* Divines, as it is delivered in their *Brief Compendium of Chriſtian Religion*. *Queſt.* What is a ſincere

a ſincere Faith? *Anſ.* "It is a ſure Knowledge of "GOD and his Promiſes, revealed to Us in the "Goſpel; and a hearty *Confidence*, that all *my* Sins "*are* forgiven, for *CHRIST*'s Sake."

With all theſe Teſtimonies, which are the Voice of Nations, I have the Happineſs to coincide. Only ſome of them are much ſtronger, in diſplaying and maintaining the ſpecial *Fiducia*, or appropriating Perſuaſion.—From this View of Things, You will at leaſt allow, that the perſonal Application of *CHRIST*, and the aſſured Confidence in *CHRIST*, are not (as they have very indecently been called) the Fiction of a crazy Brain.—Eſpecially, as I apprehend, the Determinations of Scripture, and the Experience of ſcriptural Saints, are all on our Side.

Ther. You have now brought the Cauſe to the proper Bar. When a Queſtion ſo important is debated, and an Intereſt ſo momentous is concerned, I cannot acquieſce in any Authority leſs than divine. I cannot, and indeed I think, We ought not. Nothing ſhould ſatisfy Us on ſuch an Occaſion, but the Word, which is unerring and deciſive; the Word, by which We are to ſtand or fall eternally. Whence does it appear, that the Determinations of this divine Word, are on your Side?

Aſp. From the nobleſt Deſcription of Faith, which Language itſelf can form. The Writer to the *Hebrews*, having mentioned the Life of Faith, the Perſeverance of Faith, and the End or Reward of Faith, proceeds to a Definition of this leading Grace. *Now Faith is the Subſtance of Things hoped for, the Evidence of Things not ſeen* *.—*The Eviden-*

* Heb. xi. 1.

Evidence *, exhibiting not a faint Surmiſe, but a clear Demonſtration, both of inviſible Bleſſings, and of our Right to enjoy them.—*The Subſtance* †, realizing what is promiſed; and giving Us, as it were, a Poſſeſſion of good Things that are remote, a preſent Poſſeſſion of good Things that are future.

Ther. What are thoſe Bleſſings, and theſe good Things?

Aſp. I will inform my *Theron*; and in ſuch a Manner, from ſuch Paſſages, as ſhall farther aſcertain my Repreſentation of Faith.—What ſays the Apoſtle of the Gentiles? *I preached unto You the Goſpel* ‡.—And what is the Subſtance of this evangelical Meſſage? *CHRIST died for our Sins* ‖.—That ſo exalted a Perſon as the SON of GOD, and LORD of Glory, ſhould *die*, is wonderful—That He ſhould die for *Sins*, the moſt abominable Objects, and for Sinners, the moſt deteſtable Creatures, is abundantly more wonderful—That He ſhould die, not for Sins in general, but for *our* Sins in particular, this is inexpreſſibly wonderful, and at the ſame Time inexpreſſibly comfortable—Here we have the Goſpel and its capital Bleſſing, expreſſed in this Propoſition, *CHRIST died for* Sins. Here We have Faith and its principal Acting, expreſſed in this Propoſition, *CHRIST died for* our *Sins*.

* Ελεγχος.

† Υποστασις. Perhaps, the Reader may prefer Dr. *Doddridge*'s Expoſition of this Paſſage. Which, though ſomewhat different, is truly excellent. *Faith*, He ſays, *is the confident Expectation of Things hoped for, upon* the Security of the divine Promiſe. It is alſo *the* powerful *Conviction of Things* which are *not ſeen*, but of whoſe Certainty there is ſuch a full Perſuaſion, that they act upon the Mind, as if they were preſent.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 3. ‖ 1 Cor. xv. 3.

Sins. Till the former is preached, the Doctrine is not Goſpel; till the latter is believed, it ſhould ſeem from St. *Paul*'s Account, the Conviction is not Faith.

Let me produce another Inſtance, extracted, like the preceding, from the Rolls of Heaven. *This is the Record, that GOD hath given to Us eternal Life* *; not propoſed it, on I know not what Conditions, but *hath given.* Freely and fully; without any Reſerve; and with a Liberality ſuited to his incomprehenſible Goodneſs, He hath given the richeſt of all Gifts: and not to ſome only, or to Others, but to *Us*, even to *Us.*

Ther. To Us, that is, to the Apoſtles and their Fellow-Saints. As the Epiſtle was written by an Apoſtle; it is certainly addreſſed to Men of like Mind; to *the Saints that are upon the Earth, and ſuch as excel in Virtue.*

Aſp. True: but was eternal Life given to them, becauſe they were Apoſtles? No, verily; but becauſe *CHRIST* died for them.—Did *CHRIST* die for them, becauſe they excelled in Virtue? In no wiſe; but becauſe they were miſerable Sinners. —Eternal Life was purchaſed for them, when they were Sinners. It was conſigned over to them, when they were Sinners. And neither the Purchaſe, nor the Gift, were founded on their *being* Saints, but aimed at *making* them ſo.

That *CHRIST died for our Sins*—That *GOD hath given to Us eternal Life*—Theſe are the Bleſſings, of which Faith is the Evidence; theſe the good Things, of which Faith is the Subſtance. This is the Honey in the evangelical Hive: and I am at a loſs to conceive, how it is poſſible to taſte the Honey,

* 1 John v. 9.

ney, without ſome Appropriation of the good Things to Ourſelves.—This Appropriation, if I miſtake not, is comprehended in the ſeveral figurative Deſcriptions of Faith, which occur in holy Writ.

Ther. Favour me with ſome of thoſe Deſcriptions. I begin to ſee a peculiar Beauty, and an unequaled Richneſs, in the Figures of Scripture. Nothing yields me a more refined Pleaſure, than to inveſtigate and diſcover the exact Senſe of thoſe inſtructive Images. It is ſomewhat like kindling the conſecrated Incenſe: which, when riſing in a Flame, diffuſed Light; when ſpreading in Clouds of Fragrance, diſtributed Refreſhment.

Aſp. Faith is ſtyled, *A looking unto JESUS* *. But if We do not look unto *JESUS*, as the Propitiation for our Sins, what Comfort or what Benefit can We derive from the Sight?—*A Receiving of CHRIST* †. But can I have any Pretence to receive Him, and take Poſſeſſion of his Merits, unleſs I am convinced, that they are offered or given to me? This is what neither the Dictates of Conſcience will allow, nor the Laws of Reaſon authorize.—*A Reſting upon CHRIST* ‡. But how can We

* Heb. xii. 2. † John i. 12.

‡ I find two Words in the Original, which expreſs the Privilege and the Duty of *reſting on CHRIST*. נוח which implies ſuch a State of Acquieſcence, as *ſilences* the Clamours of Conſcience, and compoſes the Perturbation of the Spirit. מנוחה which ſignifies the Refreſhment and *Repoſe* of a weary Pilgrim; when He arrives at the End of his Journey, and is ſettled for Life in a ſecure, commodious, plentiful Habitation. *Pſal.* xxxvii. 7. *Iſai.* xxviii. 12.—"It is not poſſible, ſays Mr. *Boſ-*
" *ton*, to conceive a Soul *reſting on* CHRIST for Salva-
" tion, without a Perſuaſion, that it ſhall have Life, and
" Salvation through Him." And I may add, It is equally

We reſt on a Surety, if We have no Perſuaſion, that He has interpoſed on our Behalf? Or how confide in a Payment, which We believe to be made for others, not for ourſelves?—Surely, *Theron*, when I reſt upon an Object, I uſe it as *my* Support. When I receive a Gift, I take it as *my own* Property. And when the *Iſraelites* looked unto the brazen Serpent, they certainly regarded it as a Remedy, each particular Perſon for *Himſelf*.

Ther. To caſt Ourſelves upon *CHRIST* as an all-ſufficient SAVIOUR; and rely on Him, for our whole Salvation; is not this real Faith? This is what I heard, ſometime ago, from a celebrated Pulpit.

Aſp. The Perſuaſion, that *CHRIST* is an all ſufficient SAVIOUR, is undoubtedly a Perſuaſion of what is true. But it is ſhort of the Truth, for which I am pleading. Neither does it come up to the Faith, by which I am ſaved; unleſs I honour his declared Good-will, as well as his all-ſufficient Power; and on the Authority of the former, regard the latter as my own.

You credit one Part of the Report, that *CHRIST* is a ſufficient SAVIOUR, on the Teſtimony of GOD who cannot lie. Why ſhould You not credit the ſame authentic Teſtifier *, when He repeatedly

impoſſible, without ſuch a Perſuaſion, to enjoy the Acquieſcence or obtain the Repoſe, hinted in the aforementioned Texts.

* The LORD, ſpeaking by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, ſeems to wonder, that any can doubt of his Will, after they have heard his Call. "*Wherefore when I came, was there* "*no Man, and when I called was there none to anſwer?*" *Iſai.* l. 2. Sure it muſt be owing to ſome Suſpicion of "my Power to ſave. With reſpect to my Willingneſs, there

edly declares, that this SAVIOUR, with all his Sufficiency, is really given to You? So given, that your moſt confident Appropriation cannot be diſappointed.

This is what was taught, from the Pulpit of Infallibility; and by thoſe firſt of Preachers, who ſpake as the HOLY GHOST gave them Utterance. Let the convinced Sinner, and the afflicted Soul, *truſt in the Name of the LORD, and ſtay upon his GOD.* Let Him not only reverence *CHRIST*, as the incarnate GOD, and therefore mighty to ſave; but look upon *CHRIST* as *his* GOD, and thereby made Redemption to Him in particular. Thus let Him *lean upon* the ROCK * of Ages, without indulging a Doubt, concerning his Right to make uſe of it, or the Poſſibility of its falling him.

Ther. To caſt ourſelves upon *CHRIST* then, according to your Explanation, denotes an Application of his ſaving Merit to Ourſelves.

Aſp. To *caſt Ourſelves* upon *CHRIST*; *to caſt our Burden*, or *to caſt all our Care* † *upon the LORD*; are Metaphors, which may receive ſome Elucidation, from an Incident recorded in the *Acts*. When the Mariners and Paſſengers, which ſailed with St. *Paul*, ſaw their Veſſel ſhattered; ſaw the Waves prevailing; ſaw no Hope of Safety from continuing in the Ship; they caſt themſelves ‡ upon the floating Planks. They caſt themſelves upon the Planks

"there can be no Room for Heſitation. My Call puts "this Matter beyond all reaſonable Doubt."—Therefore He proceeds, in the following Words, to give the moſt unqueſtionable Proofs of his Omnipotence. *Is my my Hand ſhortened, that it cannot redeem?* &c.

* יָד Iſai. l. 10. † Επιῤῥιψαντες, 1 Pet. v. 7.

‡ Απορῥιψαντες, Acts xxvii. 43.

without any Scruple, not queſtioning their Right to make uſe of them; and they clave to thoſe Supporters with a chearful Confidence *, not doubting but, according to the Apoſtle's Promiſe, they ſhould eſcape ſafe to Land.—Be this what People mean, when they ſpeak of *venturing* or *caſting* themſelves upon *CHRIST*, and I approve of the Expreſſion, I ſubſcribe the Doctrine †. It ſpeaks what I wiſh for my Friend, for myſelf, and for my Fellow-ſinners.

Let Us ſhift our Situation, and view the Point in another Light. Conſider the bleſſed and glorious Object of our Faith.—*CHRIST* is repreſented by the Similitude of Bread, heavenly Bread, for the hungry Soul. Faith is characterized by *eating* the Food. Can this be done without a perſonal Application? —*CHRIST* is held forth under the Image of living Waters, ever running, and always free for the thirſty Appetite. But let them run ever ſo copiouſly,

* It is queried, Whether theſe People clave with a *chearful Confidence*.—To which I anſwer. It is certain that, notwithſtanding their frightful and perilous Situation, *they were all of good Chear*. How they could, in *ſuch* Circumſtances, be *ſo* affected, without ſome Degree of Confidence in the Apoſtle's Declaration, is difficult to apprehend.—However, they made Uſe of the Planks, without any Demur as to the Matter of Right; and clave to them as confidently, as if they had been bought with their Money, and marked with their Name. And this is the Point principally intended; this is the Scope principally to be regarded. The Confidence of Appropriation, not the Aſſurance of Succeſs, is the Thing to be illuſtrated.

† Such was the Doctrine, taught by that judicious Writer Mr. *Boſton*. "This Blood is for *me*, ſays the Be-"liever; for *my* Pardon, *my* Peace, *my* Sanctification. "And therefore I will *venture* my All upon it, for Time "and for Eternity."

ouſly, let them be preſented ever ſo freely, they will neither quench the Thirſt, nor refreſh the Spirits, unleſs they are *drank**. To do this is the Buſineſs of Faith.—*CHRIST* is deſcribed as a Garment, to clothe the Naked, and beautify the Deformed. Faith is expreſſed, by *putting on* this commodious Garment, and wearing this beautiful Robe. Can any Idea, or any Expreſſion, more ſtrongly denote an actual Appropriation?

Ther. It is evident, that many holy People in former Ages, were not poſſeſſed of Aſſurance.—What is the Language of *David?* It is all Deſpondency. *I am caſt out of the Sight of thine Eyes.*—To the ſame melancholy Tune is the Harp of *Aſaph* ſtrung. *Is his Mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his Promiſe fail for evermore?*—The ſame jealous and diſtruſtful Air breathes in the Complaint of the Church. *The LORD hath forſaken me, and my LORD hath forgotten me.*—Why then ſhould *Aſpaſio* ſet up a Rule, which was too high to be reached, and too ſtrict to be obſerved, even by thoſe eminent Saints?

* Thus the Church of *England* explains thoſe myſterious Expreſſions, *Whoſo eateth my Fleſh, and drinketh my Blood.* In the Rubrick for adminiſtring the Sacrament to the Sick, She makes this public Declaration; "If He do ſtedfaſtly believe, that *JESUS CHRIST* "hath ſuffered Death upon the Croſs for *Him*, and ſhed "his Blood for *his* Redemption, earneſtly remembering "the Benefits *He hath* thereby, He doth eat and drink "the Body and Blood of our *SAVIOUR CHRIST*, "profitably to his Soul's Health."—This ſhould be of ſome Weight; at leaſt, with the Members of our Church. For my own Part, I give my Aſſent and Conſent moſt readily and unfeignedly. Neither can I ſee, how it is poſſible to feed on the heavenly Manna, any other Way.

Aſp. You ſhould rather aſk; Why have the beſt Judges, and the moſt exemplary Chriſtians, in their ſeveral Writings, ſet up this Rule? Why have the Apoſtles of our LORD, and the SPIRIT of our GOD, ſpeaking in the Bible, ſet up this Rule?—To which I might reply; Becauſe it is, of all Precepts, the moſt beneficial. Therefore, they have not ſo much ſet it up, under the Notion of a ſtrict Rule; as they have ſet it forth, under the Character of an open Door for the chief of Sinners.

Your Complaint, when put into its proper Language, ſeems to run thus; "Why muſt We be "obliged to proceed upon GOD's bare Word? Why "muſt We be obliged to truſt in *CHRIST* alone, "or to *aſſure* Ourſelves of Salvation by HIM?" Whereas, inſtead of a Complaint, it ſhould be Matter of Exultation. We ſhould rather expreſs Ourſelves in this Manner; "Bleſs the LORD, "O my Soul; that I a Sinner, a vile Sinner, ſhould "be allowed to take *CHRIST*, and all his Salva-"tion, as my own; and thus to aſſure myſelf of "Pardon, Holineſs, and Glory."

This Bleſſing was certainly enjoyed by the holy Men of old. But like every other Species of Felicity in this World, it was enjoyed after an imperfect Manner.—They had an aſſured Perſuaſion of GOD's preſent Favour, and of their own final Happineſs. Nevertheleſs, this aſſured Perſuaſion was liable to the Aſſaults, both of outward Temptations, and of inward Corruptions. Which might, for a While, impair its Vigour, or eclipſe its Luſtre, though not deſtroy its Being. As, under a tranſient Swoon, the Spirits fail, the Colour departs, but the vital Principle ſubſiſts.

You

You may farther obſerve, concerning thoſe pious Perſons, that, when they ceaſe to exerciſe this Confidence of Faith, they lament the Failure; *I ſaid, this is my Infirmity* *.—They chide themſelves for it; *Why art thou caſt down, O my Soul?*—They encourage themſelves againſt it; *Hope in GOD* †, it is thy unqueſtionable Privilege.—How could they do this? On what Grounds, or from what Motive? If they had no Perſuaſion, that their Ranſom was paid, and their GOD reconciled. Conſequently, that all their Doubts were an Injury to his Fidelity and to his Goodneſs.

Nay, the Church, even under her darkeſt Apprehenſions, ſtill ſpeaks the Sentiment, ſtill retains the Grace, for which I am pleading. *My LORD*, uttered with her Lips, argues an *applicatory* Faith in her Heart.—So copious and pregnant are the Evidences of this precious Doctrine! It is confirmed by that very Paſſage, which was produced for its Confutation.

Ther. If this be the Sentiment of the Church in general, is it alſo the Temper of her particular Members? Was each of them animated by this firm and lively Faith?

Aſp. Let theſe particular Perſons appear, and anſwer for themſelves.—Hear the Declaration of the Pſalmiſt; *Bleſs the LORD, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bleſs his holy Name* ‡. What is the Cauſe of this holy Tranſport, and devout Praiſe? Is it, becauſe GOD poſſibly *may*, becauſe He probably *will*? No; but becauſe HE actually *does* forgive: *Who forgiveth all thine Iniquities.*—Take notice of *Job*'s Belief, and *Job*'s Support, amidſt his un-

* Pſal. lxxvii. 10. † Pſal. xlii. 5. ‡ Pſal. ciii. 1, 2

exampled Sufferings. *I know that my REDEEMER liveth*; not only that there is a Redeemer, but that He is, together with all his ſaving Benefits, *mine*. Which being a Truth ſo ſweet and delightful, is expreſſed a ſecond Time; *whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf* *, to my own Advantage, and for my own Comfort. I ſhall ſee him exerting his almighty Power and infinite Mercy, to reſcue my Body from the Grave, and to deliver my Soul from Hell.—What was *Habakkuk*'s Security, amidſt the threatening, the tremendous, the triumphant Malice of his own, and his Country's Enemies? *The LORD GOD is my Strength*. He ſays not, I *wiſh*, I *pray*, for the divine Favour, and the divine Succour; but I am perſuaded, they both are mine; my ineſtimable Portion, and my inviolable Safeguard. *He will make my Feet like Hind's Feet*, ſo that I ſhall eſcape from all Danger; *and He will make me walk upon mine high Places*, beyond the Reach of every Evil †.

Ther. Is this the Language of Believers under the New Teſtament Diſpenſation? . . . .

Aſp. Under every Diſpenſation, *Theron*.—They who lived before the Law, *were perſuaded* ‡ of the Promiſes; had not the leaſt Diſtruſt with regard to the Certainty of their Performance. Nay; they *embraced them* ‖ as their own; they received them with a particular Application; and hugged them, as it were, to their very Souls.—They who lived under the Law could ſay; *As far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo far hath He removed our Tranſgreſſions from Us* §.—*Our* Tranſgreſſions; He *hath* removed; from *Us*. This is the Acknowledgment, not of *David* alone,

* Job xix. 25, 27. † Hab. iii. 19. ‡ Πεισθεντες, Heb. xi. 13. ‖ Ασπασαμενοι. § Pſal. ciii. 12.

alone, but of the *Jewiſh* Church. Every true *Iſraelite* either made it, or was authorized and exhorted to make it.—And can You imagine, that, in the Days of the Goſpel, when our Advantages are greater and our Light is clearer, our Faith ſhould be weaker? St. *Peter* makes a Profeſſion, which excludes all Doubting; *I am a Witneſs of the Sufferings of CHRIST, and alſo a Partaker of the Glory that ſhall be revealed**. St. *Paul* anſwers in the ſame heroic Strain; *I am perſuaded that neither Life, nor Death, nor any Creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate me from the Love of GOD, which is in CHRIST JESUS my LORD*†. With both which, the Confeſſion of Faith recorded by St. *Luke*, is exactly correſpondent; *We believe that, through the Grace of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, We ſhall be ſaved even as They*‡.

Ther. Was not this a Privilege peculiar to the Apoſtles?

Aſp. By no means. All Believers are Brethren, and have *like precious Faith*.—St. *Paul* congratulates Himſelf and the Chriſtians at *Epheſus*, with theſe delightful Words; *In whom We have Redemption, through his Blood, even the Forgiveneſs of Sins*. Forgiveneſs He mentions, not as a Bleſſing propoſed for their Acquiſition, but as conſigned over to their Enjoyment. What was imparted to their Souls, and manifeſted in

* 1 Pet. v. 1. † Rom. viii. 29.

‡ *Acts* xv. 11. This, We may obſerve, is the Apoſtle's Explanation of Faith; of that Faith, which the Gentiles exerciſed. It is a Belief, that We *are*, that We *ſhall be*, ſaved. Both theſe Ideas are comprehended in the original, σωθηναι. We are ſaved, by Purchaſe; ſhall be ſaved, by Power. Are ſaved inchoatively; ſhall be ſaved eternally.

in their Conſciences. Their preſent Portion, as well as their future Plea.—St. *Peter* exhorts all his Converts, diſperſed in various Parts of the World; *Gird up the Loins of your Mind, and hope to the End*; or, as the Word ſhould rather be tranſlated, hope perfectly, hope aſſuredly, *for the Grace that is to be brought unto You at the Revelation of JESUS CHRIST**. Maintain, not a dim, but a bright Hope; not a wavering, but a ſteady Expectation, of eternal Life. That free, but grand Gift, of which the *LORD JESUS*, at his ſecond Coming, will certainly make you Partakers.—The Apoſtle, writing to his *Hebrew* Converts, encourages them all to *hold faſt the Confidence*—

Ther. Confidence! This is a ſtrong and bold Word. It has ſometimes given me a little Diſguſt. But recollecting, that it is ſcriptural, I made no Objection. However, I would gladly know, to what it refers.

Aſp. To their final and everlaſting Salvation. It is explained by the ſacred Writer Himſelf. *Knowing, that Ye have in Heaven, a better and a more enduring Subſtance.* This is the Confidence, which they are excited to hold faſt.—He adds, *and the Rejoicing of Hope, firm unto the End*†. Whence it appears, that a Hope amounting to Confidence, and the Joy which naturally reſults from ſuch a Hope, were the common Portion of Chriſtians; poſſeſſed, not

* 1 *Pet.* i. 13. Εις τελος or μαλλον τελους, ſignify *To the End.* But τελειως, as far as I can recollect, is never uſed in this Senſe, either by ſacred or profane Writers. It may be rendered *perfectè, integrè*, in this Connection, *cum firmâ Fiduciâ*, with a firm Affiance.

† Heb. iii. 6.

not barely by ſome few exalted Saints, but by the Followers of *JESUS* in general.—I might bring many more Inſtances. But why ſhould I multiply Proofs? Since the beloved Diſciple declares; *Theſe Things have I written unto You, that believe on the Name of the SON of GOD, that Ye may know that Ye have eternal Life* *.

Ther. True, *Aſpaſio.* This coincides with my Apprehenſions. The Scriptures were written—firſt, that We may *believe*, and be entitled to eternal Life—next, that We may have the *Knowledge* of our Belief, and a Conſciouſneſs of our Title. The Apoſtle ſuppoſes his Correſpondents to poſſeſs the former, yet not to have attained the latter.

Aſp. Is it certain, that He makes ſuch a Suppoſition? He writes, I imagine, not with a View of leading them to either, but of *confirming* them in both.—He intimates, that the Privilege and the Comfort ſhould go together. If We believe, that *CHRIST* is our Surety; We would be perſuaded, that He has paid our Debt, and ſatisfied Juſtice to the very uttermoſt Farthing. If We believe, that *CHRIST* is our Bridegroom; We ſhould reſt aſſured, that his Righteouſneſs, his Inheritance, and his Kingdom are ours. And why ſhould We take Pains to ſeparate, what GOD's Word and the very Nature of Things have united? Will this turn to our Advantage? Muſt it not iſſue in our Loſs?—Beſides, according to your own Interpretation, whoever falls ſhort of this chearing Knowledge, falls ſhort of *one* great End for which the Scriptures were written. He receives not his full Reward. He only gleans, where He might *reap*.

Or

* 1 John v. 13.

Or rather, He is toſſed on the Ocean: whereas, *they that believe*, have gained the Port; have dropped their Anchor; and *enter into Reſt* *.

Ther. Believed! What? That our Sins are laid upon *CHRIST*? That He was obedient in our Stead? That all ſpiritual Bleſſings are thereby procured for *our*—even for *our* Enjoyment? Is this the Faith, which the Apoſtle means?

Aſp. The Bleſſings You have enumerated, are the Sum and Subſtance of the Goſpel. And I know of no other juſtifying Faith, but that which relates to the Goſpel, and believes its Report †. Nor can I think, that any other Belief will adminiſter the Tranquility, or produce the Reſt, ſpecified by the Apoſtle.—But why this inſignificant Expreſſion, *I think?* Hear a better Judge, and a more authentic Witneſs. Hear what a celebrated Divine and an admired Poet ſays, upon the Subject. Who has very happily ſtated the true Nature of Faith; that great Duty, and great Privilege, of the Goſpel!

O! for a firm, a laſting Faith,
To credit what the Almighty ſaith!
T' embrace the Promiſe of his Son,
And call the Joys of Heaven our own!

Our own! If We omit this Circumſtance, how poor and mean a Thing is Faith! Unworthy to be diſtinguiſhed, as the leading Doctrine of the whole Bible. Scarce worthy of a ſingle Wiſh from any One, or of another Word from Us.—If We do not compriſe *this* in our Faith, what do We more than apoſtate Spirits? They are perſuaded, that *CHRIST* and his Benefits are beſtowed on the Elect,

* Heb. iv. 3. † Iſai. liii. 1.

Elect, on the Converted, on Believers. But they cannot believe, that GOD gives *CHRIST* and all ſpiritual Benefits to them. They have no Ground for calling theſe Bleſſings *their own.*

Here, I find, lies the Core and Root of our Controverſy. This is the preciſe Point to be ſettled; What it is to *believe?* What is included in this very important Word?—This Queſtion might renew our Diſpute, and cauſe the paſt Arguments to recur. Whereas, I would gladly get rid of Diſputation. We have already been too long detained in theſe diſagreeable Paths. However, ſince You have given the Occaſion, let me avail myſelf of another Text or two. For I would willingly drive this Nail to the Head; and not leave my Friend unconvinced, on a Subject of the utmoſt Conſequence.

The LORD declares by his Prophet, *I, even I am He, that blotteth out thy Tranſgreſſions.* To believe, is to ſubſcribe this Declaration; to ſubſcribe with our Hand, and profeſs from our Heart, "LORD it is done, as Thou haſt ſaid."—Faith is, if I may ſo ſpeak, the Echo of the divine Voice. It eagerly catches, and punctually reverberates the joyful Sound. Does GOD ſay, *Thou art my People?* Faith replies, *Thou art my GOD:* not barely deſiring, but confidently averring, an Intereſt in his Favour. This Explanation of Faith, is given Us by a Wiſdom, which cannot be deceived; by a Fidelity, which cannot deceive *.—Once more. Our

* *Hoſ.* ii. 23. It may not be impertinent, and it will be very comfortable to obſerve; That this Paſſage reſpects, not a virtuous and obedient, but a wicked and rebellious People. GOD commands even *them*, who had hitherto walked altogether in ſinful Courſes, to call Him *their Father*, in the very firſt Step of their Return.

Our LORD bears this Teſtimony concerning *Thomas*; *Thomas, thou haſt believed.* Now then, I think, We have an infallible Touchſtone. Provided We can diſcover, what that is, which *JESUS CHRIST* calls *Believing*. Whatever it be, it is the Determination of Truth itſelf; and ſhould paſs for a Verdict, from which there lies no Appeal. And this, this is the Confeſſion, which *Thomas* made, and to which *CHRIST* refers; *My LORD, and my GOD* *. This, this expreſſes, what our Divine MASTER calls *Believing*. When, therefore, We confeſs with our Lips, and are perſuaded in our Hearts, that *JESUS* is *our LORD*, who bought Us with his Blood; that *JESUS* is *our GOD*, who will exert all his adorable Perfections for our Good; then We truly believe. We believe, in our SAVIOUR's Senſe of the Word. We have that Faith, which *He* allows to be genuine.

Ther. Is this the *conſtant* Language of Faith?—According to this Account, there is no Difference between the Infant and the Adult; between the new-born Babe, and the full-grown Man in *CHRIST*. Your ſpiritual Children, *Aſpaſio*, muſt be Men from their Birth; nay, born in all the Vigour of Manhood. Whereas, the Apoſtle makes an evident Difference between the *Babes*, the *young Men*, and the *Fathers*; between Faith, the Aſſurance of Faith, and the full Aſſurance of Faith. If We are told of a Patriarch, who was *ſtrong in Faith*; We read of ſome *Roman* Converts, who were *weak in the Faith*; and We hear our LORD ſpeaking to Diſciples, who were *fearful and of little Faith.*

Aſp.

* John xx. 28, 29.

Asp. Between Faith, and the *full* Assurance of Faith, the Apostle makes a Difference. The one is the most exalted Pitch, where the other is but an inferior Elevation. Yet both are Rounds of the same Ladder. I don't remember, that the sacred Writer any where distinguishes between Faith and Assurance. Πιστις and Πεποιθησις, *Faith* and *Confidence*, are joined in the Epistle to the *Ephesians*. It is the Opinion of the best Critics, that the Sense of the latter is included in the former. The Critic's Opinion is confirmed by the Apostle's Manner of speaking, *We have Access with Confidence through Faith* *. Could yonder Sun diffuse Warmth through the Air, if it had no Warmth in itself? Impossible! No more could Faith produce Confidence in the Believer, if, in its own Nature, it did not contain the same.

The Case of *little Faith*, I think, may be explained from our LORD's own Expostulation; *O Thou of little Faith, wherefore didst Thou doubt?* Here was a Faith, not only in CHRIST's Power, but also in his Will. Nay; here was an appropriating Faith, by which the Apostle applied both to himself.—"I verily believe, that my Divine MASTER is *able* to preserve me, even though I venture to tread upon this tempestuous Sea. I am persuaded likewise, that He *will* uphold me, and not suffer his Servant to perish in the hazardous Enterprize." Nothing less than this could have produced that hazardous Enterprize, or have emboldened Him to walk upon the rolling Billows.

Do You not discern, in this Instance, some Degree of personal Application, some real Assurance of Faith? 'Tis true, this Faith was violently assaulted

* Eph. iii. 12.

ſaulted by Doubts, and greatly infeebled by Fears*, yet ſtill, it was of the applicatory Kind. *He can, He will*, were expreſſive of its Nature; though the boiſterous Winds, and the terrifying Appearance of Things, almoſt drowned its Voice, or ſtifled the Words in their Utterance.

Ther. If You allow no Difference between Faith and Confidence, I am very ſure, St. *John* puts a Difference between *Babes, young Men*, and *Fathers*.

Aſp. He does, *Theron*. And ſo would I. Neither can I think of any Thing more proper to explain my Meaning, or eſtabliſh my Tenet, than your own Compariſon.—In ſome fruitful *Family*, You may ſee one Child in Leading-Strings; another able to walk by itſelf; a third come home, improved and cultivated, from the School of Literature. Obſerve their Speech. One liſps out a few broken Sentences; another talks intelligibly, but very incorrectly; the laſt has learned to expreſs Himſelf with tolerable Propriety. Yet each ſpeaks the

* I muſt beg of the candid Reader, to take *particular* Notice of this Limitation; and muſt intreat the impartial Examiner, not to forget this Conceſſion. We no where ſuppoſe, that a Freedom from all Fears, and a Superiority to all Doubts, are eſſential to the Believer, or form his invariable Character. We ſpeak of *Faith* conſidered *in itſelf*; and only affirm, that an appropriating Perſuaſion, or an Aſſurance of Salvation by *CHRIST*, is its true, genuine, adequate Nature. That which properly anſwers to the divine Report, and to the divine Grant of a SAVIOUR. That which properly *takes* hold of, and depends upon, the Faithfulneſs of GOD, pledged in his Word.—This Aſſurance, We allow, may be encumbered with Doubts, and may conflict with Fears. But ſtill it is *Aſſurance—real* Aſſurance—and *proves* itſelf to be ſuch, by oppoſing and ſtruggling with the contrary Principle.

the *ſame* Language, notwithſtanding the various Degrees of Fluency in their Utterance, or Purity in their Diction.—So Faith always ſpeaks one and the ſame uniform Language. Whether ſhe liſps or ſtammers; whether She whiſpers in faint Accents, or raiſes her Voice in a more manly Tone; this is ſtill the unvaried Import of her Speech; *GOD, even our own GOD, will give Us his Bleſſing.*—Can You forget, how St. *John* addreſſes even his little Children? *I write unto You, little Children, becauſe your Sins* ARE FORGIVEN *.

Ther. Will not this Account diſcourage ſome, and offend others, whoſe Experience comes ſhort of any ſuch Perſuaſion?

Aſp. I would not offend the meaneſt, nor diſcourage the weakeſt of my REDEEMER's Servants.—As for *Offence*; that cannot be given, and ought not to be taken, when all we advance is ſtrictly conformable to the unerring Oracles. Whereas, to qualify and attenuate the ſcriptural Deſcriptions of Faith, in Complaiſance to our own Experience—to make the unhappy Fluctuations and unworthy Suſpicions, which poſſeſs the Breaſts of ſome particular Chriſtians—to make them the Rule of explaining, or the Meaſure of enforcing ſo capital a Duty; this, ſure, would be an Offence to GOD, an Injury to his Word, and detrimental to the Welfare of Souls.

With regard to *Diſcouragement*; I cannot conceive, how this ſhould enſue, from informing Sinners, that they have a Right to apply *CHRIST*, and all *CHRIST*'s Merits to themſelves: or from exhorting Sinners to do this, without any

* 1 John ii. 12.

Heſitation, and with a reſolute Dependence. In this Caſe, to *doubt* is to be diſcouraged. As much as You want Certainty, ſo much You want Conſolation. The proper Way to comfort theſe diſtreſſed People, is, not to allow but to diſſipate their Doubts; to blow away thoſe dead Aſhes, that the ſmothered Embers may ſhine and glow.

Were We to inquire after the Cauſe of that Diſquietude and Deſpondency, which are ſo common among *modern* Profeſſors, I am inclined to ſuſpect, We ſhould find it lying hid in their wrong Apprehenſions both of *CHRIST*, and of Faith. —They look upon *CHRIST*, as a rigorous and forbidding Monarch, who inſiſts upon ſome hard Terms and high Qualifications. Whereas, his Heart and his Arms are ever open. His Heart as open, as infinite Love can ſet it; his Arms as open, as infinite Merit can make them.—They look upon Faith, as containing a Poſſibility only, or at moſt a Probability of Salvation through his Name. It is with them a Kind of *Peradventure*. A Situation of Mind, fluctuating and pendulous. "Perhaps, I "may ſucceed, and be eternally bleſſed. Perhaps, "I may be rejected, and eternally ruined." Such a State of Suſpenſe, in an Affair of everlaſting Conſequence, cannot but create Uneaſineſs and Anxiety.

This Uneaſineſs and Anxiety ſeem to have been little known in the earlier and better Days of the Church. And why? Becauſe Chriſtians were then expoſed to the Rage of Perſecution? Becauſe they were placed nearer the Time of *CHRIST*'s perſonal Abode on Earth? I rather think, becauſe they were taught this particular and comfortable

Application

Application of *CHRIST* and his Righteouſneſs. They exerciſed a confident Affiance on *JESUS*, as *their own* REDEEMER; and were ſhewn a more direct Way to obtain this bleſſed Confidence, than merely to ſearch after their own renewed Qualities.

Ther. Surely, *Aſpaſio*, in this Particular You differ, not from me only, but from the Generality of the *Orthodox*.

Aſp. I am ſorry to find myſelf under a Neceſſity of differing from any worthy Perſons, much more of diſagreeing with the Generality. This I can ſafely aver, that it is not from an Affectation of Novelty, or any Fondneſs for Diſputing, but from a diſintereſted Regard to the Truth of the Goſpel. I ſhould be glad to have the Concurrence of all the Serious, and all the Pious. But I dare not purchaſe their Approbation, I dare not attempt a Coalition of Sentiments, by diminiſhing the boundleſs Riches of Grace, or reſtricting the abſolute Freeneſs of Salvation by *CHRIST*.

You are pleaſed to remind me of the *Orthodox*. Pray, my dear Friend, what is the Standard of Orthodoxy?—Is it the Word of Revelation? This ſpeaks once, yea twice, nay ſome Hundreds of Times in our Favour.—Is it the Doctrine of our Reformers from Popery? With theſe We jar not, but exactly harmonize.—Is it to be taken from the old Confeſſions of Faith, and the Catechiſms of proteſtant Churches? To theſe We appeal, and have the Sanction of their Authority.—Has the *modern* Way of treating and ſtating this momentous Subject ſo much to alledge for its Support?

Let me farther aſk—Are *We* better than our Fathers? Is Chriſtianity in a thriving Condition, or practical Religion on the advancing Hand? The Reverſe, the melancholy Reverſe is undeniably true. —When our Writers enforced, and our Preachers urged, what I am defending, Profeſſors were alive, and animated with the Power of Godlineſs. Whereas, now We ſeem to be degenerated into the mere Form. We *have a Name to live, but are* languid, liſtleſs, and if not *dead* *, yet ready to die.—*It* behoves Us therefore to conſider, whether the Declenſion, the Decays, the Unfruitfulneſs, ſo juſtly lamented in the preſent Age, may not be owing to the Abſence of this appropriating Belief, of this aſſured Perſuaſion.

A ſweet Aſſurance of Pardon, a comfortable Perſuaſion of our Reconciliation with GOD, an eſtabliſhed Hope of eternal Glory through *JESUS CHRIST*; theſe will be operative in the Soul, as "a Torch in the Sheaf." Theſe will inkindle Love, and increaſe Watchfulneſs; theſe will beget the true Humility of Mind, and work an unfeigned Abhorrence of Sin; theſe will enlarge the Heart with Charity, and exalt the Affections above the World. Theſe are the proper, and the only effectual Means of *making the Man of GOD perfect*, that is, *thoroughly furniſhed to every good Work* †.

But

* Rev. iii. 1.

† For the Diſplay and Confirmation of theſe Points, I do, with great Pleaſure, and without any Diffidence, refer to Mr. MARSHAL's *Goſpel Myſtery of Sanctification*. Which I ſhall not recommend in the Style of a Critic, nor like a Reader of Taſte, but with all the Simplicity of the weakeſt Chriſtian; I mean, from *my own* Experience.

But the doubting Frame is not fitted to yield any of theſe Fruits. Nay, I am apprehenſive, there are ſeveral Graces, which can hardly be exerciſed, ſeveral Duties, which can ſcarcely be performed, ſo long as this Spirit of Diffidence prevails.

Ther. Name them, *Aſpaſio.*

Aſp. I am afraid, leſt I ſhould ſeem to arrogate the Office of a Teacher; which neither becomes my Condition, nor is agreeable to my Temper.

Ther. I beſeech You, my dear Friend, let Us wave Ceremony, and have nothing to do with Compliments. My Soul is in jeopardy. My preſent Comfort, and my everlaſting Happineſs, are at ſtake. And ſhall We ſuffer any little Punctilios to overbear ſuch weighty Conſiderations?

rience. To me it has been made ſingularly inſtructive, comfortable, uſeful. Though I have often read it, I am never weary of reading it. And every freſh Peruſal, ſtill gives me freſh Improvement, Conſolation, and ſpiritual Strength. Inſomuch, that was I to be baniſhed into ſome deſolate Iſland, poſſeſſed only of *two* Books beſides my BIBLE, this ſhould be *one* of the two; perhaps, the firſt that I would chooſe.

Should any Perſon, hitherto a Stranger to the Work, purchaſe it on this Recommendation, I muſt deſire to ſuggeſt one Caution—That He be not ſurpriſed, if, in the Beginning, He meets with ſomething new, and quite out of the common Road. Or, if ſurpriſed, that He would not be offended, but calmly and attentively proceed. He will find the Author's Deſign opening itſelf by degrees. He will diſcern more and more the Propriety of his Method. And what might, at the firſt View appear like a Stumbling-block; will prove to be a fair compendious, ample Avenue—to the Palace of *Truth*—to the Temple of *Holineſs*—and to the Bowers of *Happineſs.*

Suppoſe, You are a Teacher; I have great Need, and am very deſirous, to become your Scholar. For I freely confeſs, that, knowing as I may ſeem in other Inſtances, I am very ignorant in the great Peculiarities of the Goſpel. And a Heathen would reproach me, if I ſhould chooſe to continue in Ignorance, rather than ſubmit to Information.

Cur neſcire, pudens prave, quam diſcere malleм * ?

Nay; though I have read the Scriptures in a *critical* View, I have been an utter Stranger to their ſpiritual Meaning. Here, I am uninſtructed as a Babe; here, therefore, I ought to be teachable as a Babe. Yes; in this reſpect I would become as a *little Child*, that I may enter into the Knowledge, and poſſeſs the Privileges of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Aſp. Your Anſwer, *Theron*, ſhall be a Law.—*Love to GOD*, is the firſt Commandment; and without all Peradventure, is the principal Grace. But, is it eaſy, is it poſſible to love GOD, before We have any Perſuaſion of his Love to Us? This is what the Apoſtles did not, could not do. And, if it exceeded *their* Ability, it will doubtleſs be above the Reach of *our* Capacity. The Thing may be attempted; the Practice may be urged. We may ſee the Neceſſity of it, and deſire to perform it. But we ſhall never, never be able to exerciſe it, till We have ſome comfortable Apprehenſion of GOD's Reconciliation and good Will to Us. *We love HIM*—Wherefore? From what Inducement? *Becauſe HE firſt loved Us* †; and becauſe this Love hath been made evident to our Conſciences, by the Light of Faith.

What

* Hor. † 1 John iv. 10.

What think You of *Delight in GOD?* This also is a christian Grace; of eminent Distinction, and unspeakable Value. But *how can Two walk together, except they be agreed?* We never covet an Intimacy with the Person, who declares Himself our Enemy. Nay, if there be only a Suspicion, that He bears Us a secret ill Will, We shall be jealous of trusting Him, and averse to approach Him. This was the Case of our first Parents, immediately after the Fall. Instead of drawing near to their CREATOR, with Pleasure and Gratitude; they fled from Him, with Anxiety and Terror. And why? Because they were under the alarming Apprehensions of his Displeasure.—Whereas, let Us once believe, what the Apostle affirms; *When We were Enemies, We were reconciled to GOD by the Death of his SON* *. Let Us cordially credit, what the Prophet repeatedly declares; *Therefore will the LORD wait that He may be gracious unto You; and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have Mercy upon You* †. Then We shall seek his

* Rom. v. 10.

† *Isai.* xxx. 18. That admirable Commentator VITRINGA, who generally draws his Bow with a steady Hand, and shoots his Arrow with the exactest Aim, Here seems to have missed the Mark. *Waiting to be* gracious, according to his Interpretation, implies a *Delay* in the Exercise of the Attribute, and is the same as to *abstain from being* gracious. Had this been the Meaning, the Language would probably have been, not לחנגכם but מחנגכם

Waiting to be gracious rather signifies, to stand over a People with the continued Tenders of Grace and Mercy, even while they refuse to accept them. This was the Case with GOD and *Israel.* GOD promised to defend the *Israelites*; they obstinately refused to confide in

Face with Alacrity. Our Affections will be on the Wing to ſalute their Almighty BENEFACTOR. We ſhall *joy in GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.*

Ther. To the Enjoyment of many ſpiritual Conſolations, and the Exerciſe of ſeveral delightful Graces, I acknowlege, an aſſured Faith is neceſſary; but—

Aſp. Ay, *Theron*, You may well heſitate. It will be difficult to fill up the Chaſm in your Diſcourſe. For my part, I know not any Duty of Holineſs, which can be performed aright, without ſome Degree of this confiding Faith.—We are to *walk worthy of HIM, who hath called Us to his Kingdom and Glory* *: but if we doubt, whether We in particular are called, how can this influence our Converſation?—We are to be *Followers of GOD, as* his *dear Children* †. But if We do not, cannot, will not believe, ſo as to cry "Abba, FATHER," how can ſuch a Conſideration ſway our Hearts?—Nay; upon what Principles can ſuch a Perſon addreſs Himſelf to

in his Protection. GOD diſſuaded them from truſting in the Succour of *Egypt*; they preſumptuouſly reſolved to rely on that broken Reed. *Therefore*, ſays GOD, *I will*—withdraw my ſlighted Mercy; deny my deſpiſed Aſſiſtance;—This would be the Manner of human Procedure. But the LORD's Ways are not as Man's Ways. His Long-ſuffering triumphs over our Perverſeneſs. Therefore, He ſays, "I will not deal with them accord-"ing to their Folly. I will not turn away from them "in Diſpleaſure. I will even wait for them, and wait "upon them, till they ſee their Error, and accept my "Favour."—Amazing Condeſcenſion and Goodneſs! I was going to ſay. But *divine* Condeſcenſion and Goodneſs are, if I may ſo ſpeak, infinitely more than amazing.

* 1 Theſſ. ii. 12. † Eph. v. 1.

to discharge any Office of the *christian* Life? We are to *abound in the Works of the LORD*, from the animating Prospect of a glorious Resurrection *. This He cannot do; because He apprehends Himself to have no Lot or Portion in the blessed Hope. —We are to open our Hands in Charity to others, under a View of that heavenly Kingdom, which was prepared for Us before the Foundation of the World †: We are to cleanse Ourselves from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, on account of those precious Promises, which are freely given to us in *CHRIST JESUS* ‡: but where unbelieving Doubts predominate, these endearing and invigorating Motives are lost. The Man has no Interest in the encouraging Promises, has no Title to the blissful Inheritance; consequently, these Sinews of evangelical Obedience, with respect to him, are benumbed, withered, dead.

Once again; A true Christian, instead of dreading, *loves* the Day of *CHRIST*'s final and glorious Appearing. St. *Peter* tells Us, He *looks for it*, with pleasing Expectation, as *Sisera*'s Mother for the triumphant Return of her Son. He *hastens to* it, in ardent Desire, as the enamoured Bridegroom to the wish'd-for Hour of his Nuptials. Which, I think, can neither be a rational nor a practicable Thing, unless We have some chearing and established Hope, that, *when He shall appear, We shall be like Him, and see Him as He is.*

Ther. Such a Man may make Prayers and Supplications. Though he cannot rejoice in the Privileges,

* 1 Cor. xv. 58. † Matt. xxv. 34. ‡ 2 Cor. vii. 1.

vileges, He may requeſt them at the Throne of Grace.

Aſp. Prayer is a great Duty, and as great a Privilege. I wiſh my dear *Theron* the Spirit of Grace and Supplication. This will be better, incomparably better and more advantageous, than a Key to hidden Treaſures. But how can You pray with humble Boldneſs, or with lively Hope, unleſs You believe? Believe, that *CHRIST is your* High-Prieſt; is *your* Interceſſor with the FATHER; and, with all the Incenſe of his infinite Merit, preſents *your* Petitions? Then, and then only, can You have, what the Apoſtle calls, *Boldneſs and Acceſs with Confidence* *. Take notice of theſe vigorous Expreſſions; and at your Leiſure conſider, whether they countenance the ſuſpicious and miſgiving Temper.—At preſent obſerve, how yonder Lark warbles and mounts in the Firmament; as if ſhe was

* *Eph.* iii. 12. Προσαγωγη, *Acceſs with a chearing and graceful Aſſurance*; ſuch as thoſe Petitioners enjoy, who are introduced to the royal Preſence by ſome diſtinguiſhed Favourite.—As when *Joſeph*'s Brethren were preſented to *Pharaoh*, by the Prime Miniſter of *Egypt*, and Deliverer of the Nation. *Gen.* xlvii. 2. Παρρησια, *A Boldneſs or unreſtrained Liberty of Speech*; ſuch as Children uſe, when they preſent their Addreſſes, and make known their Requeſts, to an indulgent Father.—As when *Achſah*, a beloved Daughter, ſollicited her Suit at the Hand of *Caleb*, her generous Parent. *Judg.* i. 15. Εν πεποιθησει, *With a well-grounded and ſteady Confidence*, that We ſhall obtain both a favourable Acceptance, and a gracious Anſwer.—As when *Eſther*, made her Petition to a Sovereign, who had ſtretched out the golden Sceptre, and promiſed to grant whatever She aſked. *Eſther* v. 6. And all this, *through the Faith of CHRIST*; through the Worthineſs of his Perſon, and Prevalence of his Interceſſion. Which have more Weight and Influence in Heaven, than all Arguments, Motives, or Conſiderations, whatever.

was bidding Adieu to the Earth, and going to mingle with the Skies. An Image *this*, of believing Prayer! Should a Fowler ſhoot the ſoaring Songſter through the Wing, how would ſhe fall from her Elevation, and flutter on the Ground! An Emblem *that*, of diſtruſting Prayer.

I know not how to leave this Subject, without attending to the Teſtimony of St. *James*: than which, nothing can be more awful, and nothing more deciſive. It ſhould really alarm the doubting Diſpoſition, as much as any Solicitation to the moſt horrid Sin. It ſhould alarm the whole religious World, as much as the Beacons, ſuddenly kindled and all on a Flame, would alarm the Inhabitants of the maritime Coaſts. *Let Him pray in Faith, nothing doubting* *; *for He that doubteth is like a Wave of the Sea, driven by the Wind, and toſt.* Nay; the Apoſtle adds—and it is an Addition greatly to be regarded. It ſhould abide with Weight on our Conſciences. For it comes from a Caſuiſt, who could neither be too indulgent, through an Exceſs of Compaſſion; nor too rigorous, through an Extravagance of Zeal—*let not that Man*, the doubting Supplicant *think, that He ſhall receive any Thing of the LORD.*

Never

* *Jam.* i. 6. N. B. *Nothing doubting*, is the Apoſtle's Explanation of *Faith*.—An Explanation, which He learned from the Lips of his divine MASTER. See *Matt.* xxi. 21.—Μηδὲν διακρινόμενος is, in our Tranſlation, *nothing wavering*. But the very ſame Expreſſion is rendered, *Acts* x. 20. *Nothing doubting*. The Senſe is, either Way, alike. Though, I think, *Nothing wavering*, correſponds too nearly with the Compariſon, *Like a Wave*; makes ſomething of a diſagreeable Jingle; and flattens the Force, or ſuperſedes the Neceſſity, of the following Illuſtration.

Never then, my worthy Friend, never more be an Advocate for Doubtings. Purſue them with Fire and Sword. Give them no Quarter. Deal with them as *Saul* was commanded to treat the *Amalekites*.

Ther. Do You then aſſert, that None can be a true Believer, or find Acceptance with GOD, if He be liable to any Doubts?

Aſp. Far be the Thought from my Heart, farther ſtill the Aſſertion from my Lips.—That there is no Doubting in Faith I aver; and ſo does common Senſe; and ſo will every thinking Perſon. To receive *CHRIST*, and doubt of it, is impoſſible. To believe, that GOD hath given to Us eternal Life, and at the ſame Time to doubt of it, is ſelf-contradictory. In ſhort; to doubt of what We believe, is utterly inconſiſtent.—Yet, though there is no Doubting in true Faith, there may be many Doubts in the true Believer. Becauſe, He does not always exerciſe his Faith, and never is perfect in his Faith. He knows and enjoys, only in Part.

So far from aſſerting, what You ſuggeſt, that I verily think, there is not a Believer on Earth, whoſe Faith is wholly free from Intervals of Failure, or from the Aſſaults of Doubting. Corruption, inbred Corruption, fixes its cancrous Tooth in this, as well as in every other Gift of Grace. The moſt advanced Saint, who can ſteadily ſay, *LORD, I believe*; has Reaſon to add, *Help Thou mine Unbelief!* —This however I maintain, that all Kinds and every Degree of Doubting, are no leſs ſinful, than they are prejudicial. They are what the Goſpel cenſures,

ſures, condemns, forbids *. They are what Chriſtians muſt renounce; oppoſe; and treat, not as occaſional Enemies, but as irreconcilable Adverſaries. To theſe We muſt offer no Conditions of Peace, but, like *Hannibal* at the Altar, ſwear perpetual War.

Methinks, I would borrow the fine figurative Language of the Church: which, if it has not a direct Reference to this Subject, may very properly be accommodated to it. *Take Us the Foxes, thoſe little Foxes.* They are little in Size, and ſeem not very formidable. But they are extremely miſchievous, and *ſpoil our Vines.* They prey upon our Comfort; they eat away the Vigour of our Obedience; and make all our Graces a mere Dwarf, if not a dead Shrub.

* Matt. xiv. 31. Luke xii. 29. 1 Tim. ii. 8.

DIALOGUE XVIII.

SEE, *Theron!* See yonder black and low-hung Cloud! It points this Way. It is big with a Shower! It marches on apace; and will ſoon be over our Heads. We muſt inſtantly fly to Shelter.

Ther. It is well We have this Summer-houſe for our Shelter. The thickeſt Boughs would be inſufficient to ſcreen Us. I think, I never ſaw a more impetuous Burſt of Rain. A Shower! No, 'tis a deſcending *Deluge*. The large, ropy, reeking Drops, come down like a Torrent *.—Surpriſing! What a dreadful

* *Come down like a Torrent.*—This is the Import of that ſtrong picturesque Word וזרמו *Pſal.* lxxvii. 17. In this Manner, *The Clouds poured out Water; while the Air thundered; and the Arrows of the* ALMIGHTY *went abroad.* Mr. *Addiſon*, if I remember right, admires the Pſalmiſt's Deſcription of a *Storm at Sea*; becauſe, it dwells only upon the *grand* and *moſt ſtriking* Circumſtances; without deſcending, like *Virgil*'s enervated Repreſentation, to ſuch *little* Particulars, as the Cries of Men, and the Noiſe of Oars. *Clamorque Virûm, Stridorque Rudentum.*—

This

dreadful *Flaſh* was there! A Sheet of ſulphureous Fire, launched from the diſmal Gloom, and wrapping the whole Skies in a Blaze!—Not a Moment's Interval, between the Lightning's Rage, and the *Thunder's* Roar. How ſudden and vaſt the Exploſion! What a deep, prolonged, tremendous Peal enſues! It ſeems, as if the Poles of Earth, and the Pillars of Nature cracked!

See, my dear *Aſpaſio!* See the direful Havock; the horrid Effects of this elementary Tumult.—Yonder Oak, which reared its towering Head aloft, and ſpread wide its graceful Branches, is, in the Twinkling of an Eye, turned into a *naked Trunk*. There it ſtands, ſinged and tore; ſtripped of its verdant Honours *, and ſurrounded with its own ſhattered

This Deſcription of *a Tempeſt* is, I think, equally admirable on the ſame Account. The three greateſt and moſt terrible Peculiarities are ſelected; and expreſſed with all the Conciſeneſs, yet with all the Vigour, which Language can unite.

I have not met with any Commentator, who enters into the Spirit of the next Verſe. And in our Liturgy Tranſlation, its Majeſty ſinks into Meanneſs, its Propriety degenerates into Tautology. Whereas it is by no means a vain Repetition; but heightens and enlarges the formidable Idea, by diſplaying *the Effects* of what had been deſcribed, in the foregoing Lines. *The Voice of thy Thunder was in the Heaven*; the Vollies not only reſounded, but reſounded from Pole to Pole, and filled בגלגל the vaſt Circumference of the Skies. *The Lightnings lightened the World*; the Flaſhes not only ſhone, but ſhone far and near, and illuminated the whole World with their Blaze. *The Earth trembled* to its Center, *and* its Inhabitants *ſhook* with Horror.

* Does not this give Us the moſt awful and grand Senſe of *Pſalm* xxix. 9.? *The Voice of the LORD*, when uttered in Thunder, and accompanied with Lightning, יצרות

ſhattered Fragments. How fearful is the Artillery of Heaven!

Aſp. And why—why did not the Blow fall on this guilty Head? Why was not the fiery Bolt, which flew ſo near, commiſſioned to pierce our Hearts?—If our heavenly FATHER has been ſo tenderly careful of theſe periſhing *Bodies*, will He not be much more gracious to our immortal *Souls?* Will he not clothe them with that immaculate Robe, which is the only Security from the Stroke of eternal Vengeance?—And let me aſk, can this be a Security to Us, unleſs We are veſted with it! Could this Building, though very ſubſtantial, have ſecured Us from the ruſhing Rains, if We had not betaken Ourſelves to its friendly Covert!

CHRIST is repreſented, in the Prophecy of *Iſaiah*, by this very Image; as *a Place of Refuge, and as a Covert from the Storm and from Rain* *. That is, His Merits and Death are a ſure Protection, from the Curſe of the Law, and the Damnation of Hell. No Fury of the Elements ſo terrible as *theſe*; no Bulwark of Stone ſo impregnable as *thoſe*.—If this is a proper Emblem of *CHRIST*, to what ſhall We liken *Faith?* To a Perſuaſion, that the Shelter of the Summer-houſe is *free* for our Uſe? To a high Eſteem of its Accommodation, an earneſt Deſire after its Protection, or an habitual Tendency towards it?—Would this defend Us from the Inclemencies of the Weather? Would this keep Us dry,

יחשף יערות, not *diſcovereth the thick Buſhes*, but *ſtrips the Foreſt*; lays bare the branching Woods; reduces the moſt magnificent and flouriſhing Cedars to naked and withered Trunks. See *Joel* i. 7.

* Iſai. iv. 6.

dry, amidſt (what You call) the deſcending Deluge? Would this Eſteem, Deſire, or Tendency, unleſs carried into actual Entrance and Poſſeſſion, be a proper Safeguard, or indeed any Manner of Advantage to our Perſons?

Ther. No, *Aſpaſio*; neither would a Perſuaſion that the Summer-houſe *is mine*.

Aſp. True: but a Belief that *CHRIST* is mine, is like *entering* the Summer-houſe. When the Divine SPIRIT reveals the Grant of an all-ſufficient SAVIOUR, made and tendered to me a Sinner—when I am enabled to confide in his Death, as the Reconciliation for my Iniquities; and in his Obedience, as the Matter of my Juſtification—when I live in the Exerciſe of this realizing, appropriating Faith—then I make that Uſe of *CHRIST*, and receive that Benefit from Him; which correſpond with the Repoſe and Security. We now enjoy amidſt this hoſpitable Structure. Then, as the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks, *I enter into the Chambers, the Chambers of Peace and Salvation, and ſhut the Doors about me* *.

Ther. May I then, from this Inſtant, look upon *CHRIST*, his glorious Perſon; his perfect Righteouſneſs, and his precious Death, as my *certain* Inheritance? May I firmly believe, that in this immenſely meritorious REDEEMER, I have Pardon of Sins, the Promiſes of the Goſpel, and all ſpiritual Bleſſings, granted unto me without any Condition or any Reſerve?

Aſp. Why ſhould You not believe all this *firmly*? You have the ſame Reaſon to believe with a ſteady Confidence, as to believe with any Degree of Af-

* Iſai. xxvi. 20.

fiance. It is the free Promiſe of the Goſpel, addreſſed to *Sinners*, that warrants the latter; and the very ſame Promiſe, under the ſame Circumſtances of *unmerited* Munificence, authorizes the former.

You have heard my Opinion, hear now what our LORD Himſelf ſays; *Let Him that is athirſt, come; and whoſoever will, let Him take the Water of Life freely* *. The Water of Life is that, which produces, maintains, and ſtrengthens the Life of GOD in the Soul. An Office, which nothing can perform, but thoſe ſpiritual Bleſſings, You have juſt been mentioning. Theſe let the thirſty, let the Sinner, let *whoever will*, take; as freely, as He makes uſe of the moſt common Refreſhments; as freely, as He drinks of the running Stream. This is the royal Proclamation.—

Hear his gracious Invitation. *Look unto Me, and be ye ſaved* †; ſaved from your diſquieting Fears, by Juſtification; ſaved from your domineering Corruptions, by Sanctification; ſaved from every Evil, by complete and eternal Redemption. To whom is this moſt affectionate Call directed? Not to a few diſtinguiſhed Favourites only, but to *all the Ends of the Earth*. None are excepted; none are prohibited; and can my *Theron* imagine, that *He* is excluded?

Nay farther; Hear our LORD's earneſt Entreaty; hear his tender and repeated Importunity; *As though GOD did beſeech You by Us; We pray You, in CHRIST's Stead, be ye reconciled to GOD* ‡. Hark! 'Tis the Voice of infinitely condeſcending Love,

* Rev. xxii. 17. † Iſai. xlv. 22. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 20.

Love, ſpeaking by his Ambaſſador—" Sinners, " accept my great Salvation. Enjoy what I have " purchaſed for You, by my dying Agonies. Do " not ſuſpect my Kindneſs, or refuſe my Gifts. " This will wound me deeper, than the Spear which " pierced my Heart."—O! the Grace of our exalted KING! He bows from his celeſtial Throne. He almoſt kneels to his guilty Creatures. He begs, He even begs of obnoxious Sinners, not to reject his Mercies.—After all this, can you entertain the leaſt Doubt, *Theron*, whether you have a Permiſſion to believe firmly?

Ther. This is extraordinary Goodneſs indeed! I have often read theſe Paſſages, but never ſaw them, till this Hour, in a Light ſo engaging, and ſo encouraging.

Aſp. Should not this three-fold Cord be ſtrong enough to draw my dear Friend; let me add (what muſt abſolutely ſuperſede all Objections) the plain, expreſs, peremptory Command of the ALMIGHTY: *This is his Command, that We ſhould believe on the Name of his Son JESUS CHRIST* *. Pray, examine the Language; Not He *allows* only; or barely *adviſes*; but He *commands* †. We are not only

* 1 John iii. 23.

† *Luther*, at a certain Time, was violently haraſſed and afflicted with Temptations. Inſomuch, that his Heart was rent with Anguiſh; the Tears ſtreamed from his Eyes; and his Breath was ſpent in Sighing. Amidſt theſe Pangs of Diſtreſs, a Perſon accoſted Him with the following Words; " My Son, why doſt Thou mourn? " Doſt Thou not know, that GOD hath *commanded* " Thee to believe?"—When I heard that Word COMMAND, ſays the zealous Reformer, it prevailed more

only permitted, but ſtrictly required. It is not only our Privilege, but GOD's poſitive Injunction.—Upon the Diſcovery of ſuch a SAVIOUR, methinks every Heart ſhould cry; "O! that I "might be allowed to approach him! To ſolicit "an Intereſt in Him! How gladly would I wait, "ever ſo long a time, in ever ſo mean a Poſture, "if I might at the laſt receive Him as my Portion?" —The ſuperabundant Goodneſs of GOD, prevents our Wiſhes, and exceeds our Hopes. "I "freely give my SON, ſaith the LORD, and "all his Riches to You. I beſeech You, as a "compaſſionate *Friend*, not to refuſe Him. I enjoin "You, as an uncontroulable *Sovereign*, to believe "on Him."—Gracious! moſt amazingly gracious is this Command! And give me leave to hint, it is the greateſt, the moſt important Command, that ever iſſued from the Throne of Glory. If this be neglected, no other can be kept; if this be obſerved, all others will be eaſy.

Now, *Theron* ſhall We not receive *CHRIST*, and look upon his all-ſufficient Merits, as our own? Is not our Warrant clear and unexceptionable? Nay, is not our Obligation ſtrong and indiſpenſible? Shall We ſtill diſpleaſe the moſt high GOD, and give Him Occaſion to ſay? *How long will this People provoke me? And how long will it be, e'er they believe me, for all the Signs which I have ſhewed*

on my Heart, than all that I had heard, or read, or thought on before.

Upon this Text Mr. *Ambroſe* very properly argues; The LORD hath commanded me to believe; therefore it is my Duty. But becauſe I cannot believe, unleſs I apply the Promiſe to myſelf; therefore it is my Duty to conclude, that the Promiſe belongs to me.

ed amongſt them *, and all the Encouragements which I have given to them.

Ther. Is this Command directed to *Sinners* †? Make this appear, and then I will readily own; That a fuller Proof of your Point, cannot be urged; a ſtronger Inducement to believe, cannot be produced.

Aſp. You ſet me a Taſk, as eaſy, as it is pleaſing. If I could not demonſtrate this Point, I ſhould be at a Loſs to diſcover any glad Tidings in the Goſpel.—I mention not the Jaylor of *Philippi*, who was prevented in the very Act of Suicide. I paſs by the Woman of *Samaria*, who lived in a Courſe of Fornication. I ſhall exhibit one Proof only, which may ſerve inſtead of Multitudes. Our LORD's Commiſſion to his Apoſtles is, *Go Ye into all the World, and preach the Goſpel to every Creature* ‡.—Should You enquire; What is the Goſpel? We cannot have a better Expoſitor, than the Angel from Heaven. *Behold! I bring good Tidings*; or to ſpeak more exactly according to the Original, *ευαγγελιζομαι I preach the Goſpel.* The Tenour of which is; *To You is born a SAVIOUR, which is CHRIST the LORD* ‖. *A SAVIOUR*, to deliver You from Sin, from Hell, from every Evil. This SAVIOUR is *the LORD*; the great

* Numb. xiv. 11. See alſo Pſal. lxxviii. 22.

† This is the great Difficulty, to be got over by an awakened Conſcience. Here She is ſtartled and at a ſtand. Here She ſees Lions raging to terrify her, and Mountains riſing to oppoſe her. As this is the poſing Queſtion; the Scruple, that ſo often recurs in Fact and Experience; the Reader will not wonder, if it preſents itſelf more than once, in the Dialogues.

‡ Mark xvi. 15. ‖ Luke ii. 10, 11.

JEHOVAH manifeſted in your Fleſh; GOD Himſelf, becoming incarnate, on purpoſe to accompliſh the marvelous Work.—Wherefore is this preached? Not to be the Subject of Speculation, but *for the Obedience of Faith* *. That Men may ſhew their dutiful Regard to the divine Teſtimony, by believing it for themſelves. The only Obedience, that can be paid to ſuch a Report. Therefore it is added, *To you* is born.—But who are called, thus to believe, thus to obey? *All the World*; *every Creature*. And can it be ſuppoſed, that all the World was holy? That every Creature was righteous? You well know, that, inſtead of being all righteous, there was None righteous, *no*, not one. They were altogether become abominable, and guilty before GOD. Yet was *this* Obedience of Faith enforced on, and enjoined to them; abominable and guilty as they were.—To *this* agreeth the *Weſtminſter* Confeſſion. "GOD freely *offereth* unto SINNERS Life and Salvation by *JESUS CHRIST*, *requiring* of them Faith in Him, that they may be ſaved."

Ther. Truly, *Aſpaſio*, You put all my miſtruſtful Apprehenſions to the Stand. Here is a *Proclamation* from the bleſſed GOD—ſeconded by his *Invitation*—accompanied by his *Entreaty*—enforced by his *Command*—and all addreſſed to *Sinners*. I know not what can be a fuller Proof of your Point, or a ſtronger Inducement to believe.

Aſp. Yes, my Friend; I can produce (if ſuch a Thing be poſſible) ſtronger Proof ſtill. Such as, I hope, will totally rout Unbelief, and drive all her Forces from the Field.

GOD

* Rom. xvi. 26.

GOD has not only invited Us, entreated Us, and commanded Us, to live under the ſweet Perſuaſion, that his SON is our SAVIOUR; but he has given Us the grandeſt *Ratification* of this precious Truth.—He has paſſed his Word; He has made Us a firm Promiſe; nay, He has given Us *many* and *various* Promiſes, of this ineſtimable Bleſſing. And *GOD is not a Man, that He ſhould lie; or the Son of Man, that he ſhould repent. Hath He ſaid, and ſhall He not do it? Or hath He ſpoken, and ſhall He not make it good*?* Heaven and Earth may drop into nothing, ſooner than one Promiſe, or indeed one Jot or Tittle of his Promiſe, ſhould fall to the Ground.

Beſides this, He has given Us, if I may ſo ſpeak, a Note under his own Hand. He has *recorded* his Promiſes in the Bible, and *written* them with an everlaſting Pen. So that they will ſtand conſpicuous and indelible, like a Bill drawn upon Heaven, and a Baſis laid for Faith, ſo long as the Sun and Moon endure.

Nay, He has confirmed all, by the moſt ſolemn Sanction imaginable; by his *Oath*; by *his own* Oath; by the Oath of *a GOD*. Though his Word is ſure, and his Promiſe immutable, He adds (aſtoniſhing Condeſcenſion! adorable Benignity!) He adds HIS OATH to all.—He not only ſpeaks, but ſwears; ſwears by Himſelf; ſwears by his own eternal Exiſtence; that his Promiſes belong—*to whom?* Mark this Particular with the moſt exact Attention. To whom do the Promiſes belong, which are ratified in this inviolable Manner?—To

* Numb. xxiii. 19.

the Holy, the Upright, the Accomplished?—This is what Reaſon might imagine; but this is not what Revelation affirms. To thoſe poor Sinners they belong, *who*, all obnoxious and undone, like Murtherers before the Officer of Juſtice, having nothing to plead, *fly for Refuge*. Fly *to* the Aſylum, the Sanctuary, *the Hope ſet before them** in the Blood, the Righteouſneſs, the ineffable Merits of *CHRIST*.

Ther. May I then believe; firmly believe; aſſuredly believe; that *JESUS* the Mediator, and all the Promiſes of the Goſpel, all the Benefits of his Mediation, are mine? Pardon me, *Aſpaſio*, for reiterating the Queſtion. I am really, with reſpect to the Obedience of Faith, too much like that *Saxon* Monarch, who, for his Remiſſneſs and Inactivity, was ſurnamed *The Unready* †.

Aſp. I do more than pardon my *Theron*. I feel for Him, and I ſympathize with Him. Not becauſe He has not ſufficient Evidence from the Word of GOD, for the appropriating Perſuaſion, ſo neceſſary to his Happineſs; but becauſe I *alſo have* experienced that perverſe Tendency in my Heart, to miſtruſt the infallible Word of my GOD, as though

* *Heb.* vi. 17, 18. The Promiſes are confirmed, in this wonderful Manner, not to thoſe only who *have fled*, but to thoſe alſo who *fly*. Intimating, that in the very firſt Act of flying to *CHRIST*, guilty Creatures have a Right to look upon all the Promiſes as their own. Every one made as ſure to them, as the Oath of a GOD can make it. The Original is, not οἱ καταφυγοντες, but οἱ καταφυγοντες; and ſhould be tranſlated, not *who have fled*, but *who do fly*.

† ETHELRED.

though He was leſs to be depended on than fallible Man.

But let Us reflect a Moment—Suppoſe any Neighbour of Subſtance and Credit, ſhould bind himſelf by a deliberate *Promiſe*, to do you ſome particular Piece of Service—if he ſhould add to his Promiſe a *Note* under his own Hand—if he ſhould corroborate both by ſome authentic *Pledge*—if he ſhould eſtabliſh all by a moſt awful and ſolemn *Oath*—Could you ſuſpect the Sincerity of his Engagement, or harbour any Doubt with regard to its Execution? This would be moſt unreaſonable in any One; and to your generous Temper, I am very certain, it would be impoſſible.—Let us remember, that GOD has given us all this Cauſe for an Aſſurance of Faith, and more. Nay; I will defy the moſt timorous and ſuſpicious Temper, to demand from the *moſt treacherous* Perſon on Earth, a greater, ſtronger, fuller Security, than the GOD of infinite Fidelity has granted to you and me.—After all this, one would think, Diffidence itſelf could no longer heſitate, nor the moſt jealous Incredulity demur. Can we with-hold that Affiance from the unchangeable CREATOR, which we could not but repoſe on a variable Creature?

Ther. You rouze and animate me, *Aſpaſio*. O! that I may, with the divine Aſſiſtance, ſhake off this Stupor of Unbelief! Certainly, it can never be honourable to GOD, nor pleaſing to *CHRIST*, nor profitable to Ourſelves.

Aſp. If it be, then cheriſh it; maintain it; and never relinquiſh it.—But how can it be *honourable*

to

to GOD? It depreciates his Goodneſs; it is Reproach to his Veracity; nay, the Apoſtle ſcruples not to affirm, that it *makes him a Liar* * Whereas, by believing his Teſtimony, we glorify his Faithfulneſs; glorify his Beneficence; and, as *John* the Baptiſt ſpeaks, *ſet to our Seal, that GOD is true* †.—I have been informed, that, when the late *Elector* of *Hanover* was declared, by the Parliament of *Great-Britain*, Succeſſor to the vacant Throne; ſeveral Perſons of Diſtinction waited upon his Highneſs, in order to make timely Application for the moſt valuable Preferments. Several Requeſts of this Nature were granted, and each was confirmed by a kind of promiſſory Note. One Gentleman, particularly, ſolicited for the *Maſterſhip* of the *Rolls*. Being indulged in his Deſire, he was offered the ſame Confirmation, which had been vouchſafed to other ſucceſsful Petitioners. Upon which, he ſeemed to be under a Pang

* 1 *John* v. 10. *He that believeth not GOD, hath made Him a Liar.* How, or wherein? *Becauſe He believeth not the Record, that GOD hath bore concerning his SON.* What is this Record, whoſe Diſbelief brings ſuch Guilt upon Us, and puts ſuch an Affront upon GOD? It is this; *That GOD hath given to Us eternal Life, in and with his SON.* Not that He hath given the invaluable Bleſſing to ſome Perſons, diſtinguiſhed and peculiarly happy. Not that He hath given it to all the Saints and all the Elect. This even Men of reprobate Minds believe. Yet do they not hereby ſet to their Seal, That GOD is true. Therefore the proper Belief is, That GOD hath given eternal Life to loſt Mankind, and TO US in particular. So given it, that We, as well as They, are warranted and welcome to take Poſſeſſion of it by Faith.

† John iii. 33.

Pang of graceful Confuſion and Surpriſe; begged, that he might not put the royal Donor to ſuch unneceſſary Trouble; at the ſame time proteſting, that he looked upon his Highneſs's *Word*, as the very beſt Ratification of his Suit.—With this Conduct, and this Compliment, the Elector was not a little pleaſed. "This is the Gentleman, he ſaid, "who does me real Honour; treats me *like a King*; "and whoever is diſappointed, He ſhall certainly "be gratified." So, the Patriarch, *who ſtaggered not* through Unbelief, *gave*, and in the moſt ſignal, the moſt acceptable Manner, *Glory to GOD* *. Reſpecting Him as a Being, of boundleſs Benignity, and eternal Veracity.

Is it *pleaſing to CHRIST?*—Quite the reverſe. It diſhonours his Merit; it detracts from the Dignity of his Righteouſneſs; it would enervate the Power of his Interceſſion. Accordingly you may obſerve, there is nothing which our LORD ſo frequently reproved in his Followers, as this Spirit of Unbelief.—What ſays He to his Diſciples, when He came down from the Mount of Transfiguration? *O faithleſs and perverſe* † *Generation!* They were perverſe, becauſe faithleſs.—What ſays He to the Travelers, whom He overtook in their Journey to *Emmaus? O Fools, and ſlow of Heart to*

* Rom. iv. 20.

† Διεστραμμενη, Matt. xvii. 17. Which Expreſſion intimates, that a believing State of Mind, is like ſome *well arranged* and beautiful Syſtem of Limbs. Whereas, Unbelief *diſlocates* the Parts, and *diſtorts* the harmonious Frame; Unbelief deſtroys its comely Proportions, and interrupts its regular Operations.

to believe * ! They were Fools, becauſe ſlow to believe.—What ſays He to the Apoſtles, after his Reſurrection? *JESUS upbraided them with their Unbelief* †. He took no notice of their cowardly and perfidious Behaviour; He inveighed againſt none of their other Follies and Infirmities; but He upbraided them with their Unbelief. Not *gently rebuked.* No; this was a Fault, ſo unreaſonable in itſelf, ſo reproachful to their MASTER, ſo pernicious to themſelves, that He *ſeverely reprimanded* them for it; with an Air of Vehemence, and with a Mixture of Invective.

Is it *profitable to Ourſelves?*—Nothing leſs. It damps our Love, and diminiſhes our Comfort. It ſubjects Us to that Fear, which hath Torment; and diſqualifies Us for that Obedience, which is filial. In a word; this diſtruſtful and unbelieving Temper

* Ανοητοι, Luke xxiv. 25. Not *thoughtleſs*, but *ſtupid* Creatures; void of Underſtanding; as we ſay in *Engliſh*, *without common Senſe*; or, as *Horace* would have ſaid in *Latin*,

O tribus Anticyris Caput inſanabile!

† *Mark* xvi. 14. The Word is not επιτιμησεν, as in *Luke* xvii. 3. not ελεγξειν, as in *Tit.* i. 13. but ωνειδισε. Which ſignifies, not barely a Rebuke, but a Rebuke accompanied with *keen* and *ſtinging* Reflections; ſuch as may cover the Face with Bluſhes, and wound the Heart with Anguiſh.—It is uſed, by the Evangeliſt *Luke*, and by the Apoſtle *Peter*, to deſcribe thoſe Calumnies, Invectives, and Reproaches, with which the Perſecutors of Chriſtianity endeavoured to *gall* and *afflict* the Chriſtians. *Luke* vi. 22. 1 *Pet.* iv. 14.—Though our *LORD JESUS* was moſt amiably tender and gentle; yet, when Severity was neceſſary and wholeſome, He knew how to be ſevere. Our all-wiſe PHYSICIAN could apply the *Cauſtic*, as well as adminiſter the *Cordial*. See a moſt pregnant Exemplification of this Remark, *Matt.* xii. 19, 20. compared with Verſ. 34, &c.

Temper weakens every Principle of Piety, and impoveriſhes the whole Soul.—Whence come ſpiritual Inactivity and Remiſſneſs? Whence proceed Sterility and Unfruitfulneſs in the Knowledge of *CHRIST?* St. *Peter* aſcribes them all to an habitual Unbelief. Such Perſons, he ſays, *have forgotten that they were purged from their former Sins* *. A Forgetfulneſs of this grand Benefit is, to every Kind of practical Godlineſs, like a Lethargy to the Powers of the Body †, or like a Blaſt to the Fruits of the Tree ‡.

Let Us then, my dear Friend, *caſt away this Sin*, which *ſo eaſily beſets Us* both. It clogs our Feet; it hampers all our Powers; and hinders Us from *running* with Alacrity and Speed, *The Race that is ſet before Us*.—What ſays *David? GOD hath ſpoken in his Holineſs* ‖; hath made an expreſs and inviolable Promiſe, that I ſhall be Ruler of his People *Iſrael. I will rejoice therefore*; away with every alarming Apprehenſion. Notwithſtanding all Oppoſition, I will exult in Hope. Nay more; *I will divide Shechem, and mete out the Valley of Succoth*; I will look upon the whole Land as my own. I will divide it, and diſpoſe of it, juſt as if it was already in my Poſſeſſion—Why ſhould not you and I alſo ſay? *GOD hath ſpoken in his Holineſs*; hath expreſsly and ſolemnly declared, *The Promiſe* of an all-

* 2 Pet. i. 8, 9. † Αργους.

‡ Ακαρπους. The *Greek*, αργους which We tranſlate *barren*, ſignifies *ſupine, negligent, ſlothful.* This varies the Idea, and points out the immediate Cauſe of the Evil, which is expreſſed in the following Word ακαρπους. *Slothfulneſs* occaſions *Unfruitfulneſs*, and both are produced by *Unbelief.*

‖ Pſal. lx. 6.

all-ſufficient SAVIOUR *is to You. We will rejoice therefore*; confiding in this moſt faithful Word, We will bid adieu to all diſquieting Fears, and make our Boaſt of this glorious REDEEMER. Yes; notwithſtanding all our Unworthineſs, *CHRIST* and his Atonement, *CHRIST* and his Righteouſneſs, are ours. GOD hath paſſed his Word; and his Word ſhall ſtand for ever. Amidſt all the Fluctuations of our Temper, and all the Surges of Temptation, this is our Anchor. Its Hold is firm, and its Ground immoveable *.

Ther. I have heard ſome People diſtinguiſh, between the Faith of *Reliance*, and the Faith of *Aſſurance*; between the *reflex* and the *direct* Act of Faith. Methinks, I approve theſe Sentiments, though I diſlike the Terms. The Sentiments are happily adapted, to the Relief of human Infirmity; though the Terms are rather too abſtruſe, for ordinary Capacities to underſtand.

Aſp. I cannot ſay, that I am very fond, either of the one, or of the other. In my Opinion, they both partake too much of the Subtility of the Schools; and are more likely to create Perplexity, than to adminiſter godly Edifying. For which Reaſon, I ſhould chooſe to drop the difficult Phraſes, and

* This very important Doctrine is more copiouſly diſplayed, in a Sermon of Mr. *Erſkine*'s on the *Aſſurance of Faith*, Vol. III. p. 201.—Were I to read, in order to refine my Taſte, or improve my Style; I would prefer Biſhop *Atterbury*'s Sermons, Dr. *Bates*'s Works, or Mr. *Seed*'s Diſcourſes. But were I to read, with a ſingle View to the Edification of my Heart, in true Faith, ſolid Comfort, and evangelical Holineſs; I would have recourſe to Mr. *Erſkine*, and take his Volumes for *my Guide, my Companion, and my own familiar Friend.*

and not to dwell on the nice Diſtinctions. Yet, if We muſt not diſmiſs them, without ſome Notice, I would juſt remark—

That the Faith of *Reliance*, in its true ſcriptural Senſe, includes or preſuppoſes a Degree of Aſſurance.—*Includes*; for what is Reliance, but a Repoſe of the Mind, which is attended with Tranquility, and excludes Perturbation? How can this take place, if there be no Sort of Conviction, That *the LORD is my Light and my Salvation?—Preſuppoſes*; for, who would rely on a Satisfaction made, without being perſuaded, that the Satisfaction is for Him and his Iniquities? Reliance, ſeparated from this Perſuaſion, ſeems to be neither comfortable, nor reaſonable.

As to thoſe, who inſiſt upon what they call the *reflex* Act of Faith; ſure, they miſtake the Nature of the Thing. This, if I underſtand them aright, is their Way of arguing; "I am a new Creature; "I love the *LORD JESUS* in Sincerity; I "have the Fruits of the SPIRIT. From "whence it is plain, that *CHRIST* and his "Salvation are mine." Now, in all this Procedure, I cannot diſcern the leaſt Foot-ſtep of Faith; no not the leaſt Trace of receiving a Teſtimony, or relying upon a SAVIOUR. Here is nothing more than a logical Deduction of one Propoſition from another; a Concluſion drawn from given Premiſes. Grant the latter, and any Perſon, without any Aid from the SPIRIT, will infer the former. It may, therefore, more properly be reckoned an Act of Reaſoning, than of Believing; it is founded on what We Ourſelves *feel*, not upon the *Record* of a faithful GOD; and it is ſtyled,

by

by judicious Writers, the Aſſurance of *Senſe* rather than of Faith.

When, in Conformity to the afore-mentioned Opinion, We are adviſed to prove our Title to Comfort, by genuine Marks of Converſion; and taught, on this Column to fix the Capital of Aſſurance; I would rather propoſe a Queſtion, than advance Objections.—Is not this ſomewhat like placing the Dome of a Cathedral, upon the Stalk of a Tulip?

Ther. No, ſay They; it was the Practice of the Apoſtle Himſelf; and He has left it upon Record, as a Pattern for all Poſterity to copy. *We know that We are paſſed from Death unto Life, becauſe We love the Brethren.*

Aſp. Obſerve, *Theron*, the Proceſs of the Apoſtle's Reaſoning. It is like the Form of an inverted Cone; where You have firſt the Point, and from thence proceed to the Baſe. So the ſacred Writer begins with the leſs, and aſcends to the greater Proof. He ſays, in one of the following Verſes; *Hereby perceive We the Love of GOD*, becauſe He laid*

* 1 *John* iii. 16. The Word *GOD* is not in the Original. It was omited by the Apoſtle, juſt as the particular Name is omited by *Mary*, when She ſpeaks to the Gardener; *Sir, if thou haſt borne* Him *hence*—and by the *Church*, when She addreſſes the ſacred Object of her Affection; *Let* Him *kiſs me with the Kiſſes of his Mouth*: John xx. 15. Cantic. i. 1.—In all which Places, there is a Language, a very emphatical Language, even in the Silence. It declares, how deeply the Heart was penetrated, how totally the Thoughts were poſſeſſed, by the beloved and illuſtrious Subject. It expreſſes alſo the ſuperlative Dignity and Aimiableneſs of the Perſon meant: as though *He*, and He *alone*, either was, or deſerved

laid down his Life, not merely for Sinners, but *for Us* in particular.—Here, You ſee, is Aſſurance by the direct Act of Faith. From this Truth believed, from this Bleſſing received, the Love of the Brethren takes its Riſe. Which may very juſtly be admited as an Evidence, that our Faith is real, and our Aſſurance no Deluſion. As yonder Leaves may ſerve to diſtinguiſh the particular Species, and aſcertain the healthy State, of the Trees on which they grow.

When your Tenants bring in their Rent, this affords no contemptible Evidence, that the Lands, which they reſpectively occupy, are yours. But this is a Proof which does not occur, either every Day or every Week; it is occaſional only, and of the ſubordinate Kind.—The *grand* Demonſtration, that which is always at hand, and always forcible, is, your Poſſeſſion of the *Deeds* of Conveyance. Thus, the Promiſe of GOD in his divine Word is our Charter, or the authentic Conveyance of our Right to Pardon and Salvation. Make juſt the ſame Difference between this Promiſe and your own Holineſs, as You make between the Writings of your Eſtate and the Receival of the Revenues, You will then judge aright, becauſe your Judgment will coincide with the Apoſtle's.

Beſides; this Method of ſeeking Peace and Aſſurance, I fear, will perplex the Simple-minded; and cheriſh, rather than ſuppreſs, the Fluctuations of Doubt. For, let the Marks be what You pleaſe, a Love of the Brethren, or a Love of all Righteouſneſs,

ſerved to be, known and admired by *All*. For which Reaſon, to mention his Name, or diſplay his Excellencies, ſeemed as *needleſs*, as to ſhew Light to the opened Eye.

ouſneſs, a Change of Heart or an Alteration of Life; theſe good Qualifications are ſometimes like the Stars at Noon-Day, *not eaſily*, if at all, diſcernable; or elſe they are like a Glow-worm in the Night, *glimmering*, rather than ſhining. Conſequently will yield, at the beſt, but a feeble, at the worſt, a very precarious Evidence.—If, in ſuch a manner, We ſhould acquire ſome little Aſſurance, how ſoon may it be unſettled by the Incurſions of daily Temptation, or deſtroyed by the Inſurrection of remaining Sin! At ſuch a Juncture, how will it keep its Standing! How retain its Being! It will fare like a tottering Wall, before the Tempeſt; or be *as the Ruſh without Mire, and the Flag without Water* *.

Inſtead therefore of poring on our own Hearts, to diſcover, by inherent Qualities, our Intereſt in *CHRIST*, I ſhould rather renew my Application to the free and faithful Promiſe of the LORD; aſſert and maintain my Title, on this *unalterable* Ground.—"Pardon is mine, I would ſay, Grace "is mine, *CHRIST* and all his ſpiritual Bleſ-"ings are mine. Why? becauſe I am conſcious "of ſanctifying Operations in my own Breaſt? "Rather becauſe *GOD hath ſpoken in his Holineſs*; "becauſe all theſe precious Privileges are con-"ſigned over to me in the everlaſting Goſpel, with "a *Clearneſs* unqueſtionable as the Truth, with a "*Certainty* inviolable as the Oath of GOD."

Caſt your Eye into yonder Meadow. Take notice of that induſtrious *Fiſherman*; how intent He is upon the Purſuit of his Buſineſs! He has juſt thrown his Net, and taken a conſiderable Booty. You

* Job viii. 11.

You do not ſee Him ſpending his Time in idle Triumphs, on account of his Succeſs. He does not ſtand to meaſure the Dimenſions of the Fiſh, or compute the Value of his Prize. But having, without Delay, ſecured the Captives; He prepares for *another* Caſt, and hopes for *another* Draught.

So let Us, inſtead of exulting in any paſt Acquiſitions, ſeek afreſh to the inexhauſtible Fulneſs of GOD our SAVIOUR. If we have been bleſſed with any Taſte of his Goodneſs, or any Tokens of his Love, let Us not too fondly dote upon the Sweetneſs of ſuch Experiences. Let Us not make them the Foundation of our Confidence, but only ſo many Encouragements to perſevere and advance believing. That, having Life and having Peace from our Divine HEAD, we may have them *more abundantly* *. Then will be fulfilled the Saying which is written; *The Juſt*, the Righteous in *JESUS CHRIST—ſhall live*, ſhall not only be delivered from Condemnation and Death, but ſhall thrive in Comfort, and flouriſh in Godlineſs—How? By reflecting on their Sanctification, or viewing their own Attainments? No; but by the infinitely more encouraging Views of their Completeneſs in *CHRIST*, and *by* a freſh, a repeated, a never-ceaſing Exerciſe of *Faith* †, on that HOLY ONE of GOD.

This the Apoſtle has teſtified, and this the Prophet confirms. *Thou ſhalt keep Him in perfect Peace, whoſe Mind is ſtaid* in a fixed Dependence *on Thee* ‡. And

* John x. 10. † Rom. i. 17.

‡ *Iſai.* xxvi. 3. סמוך. Not hovering in Suſpenſe; doubtful, whether it ſhall confide, or no; but determined

And why? Becauſe, ſuch a Perſon, examining his Conduct, diſcovers the Evidences of a living Faith? This Anſwer many ſerious People would make. But the inſpired Writer has made another; which I cannot but prefer, and in which I fully acquieſce. *Thou ſhalt keep Him in perfect Peace*, BECAUSE *He truſteth* ſteadily, habitually, inceſſantly, *truſteth in Thee*. Whatever Variations may happen, within Him or around Him, in the Frame of his Heart, or the Circumſtances of his Life, as to this grand Point, He is fixed and invariable. He truſteth, ſtill truſteth in THEE—in Thee, O thou adorable JEHOVAH; that all thy infinite Perfections are his Shield, and his exceeding great Reward—in Thee, O thou exalted *JESUS*; that all thy inconceivable Merits, are his juſtifying Righteouſneſs, and the Strength of his Salvation—in Thee, O thou eternal SPIRIT; that Thou wilt never leave Him, nor forſake Him; but ſanctify Him throughout, and ſupport Him to the End.

This is the Expedient, the effectual and happy Expedient, to feed that Lamp of Godlineſs, and to quicken that Flame of Zeal; which, having cheared Us in our earthly Pilgrimage, and animated Us in our Chriſtian Warfare, will be brightened into a Crown of immortal Glory in the Heavens.

Here the diſappointed Viſitants went in; and, after a ſlight Refreſhment, took Coach.—As they were returning Home, *Theron* obſerved, not without Concern, the changed and melancholy Aſpect of Things, in the Territories of the Huſbandman.

The

mined and *eſtabliſhed*. *Vitringa*, upon the Place, very juſtly obſerves; *Veræ Fidei eſt Character, eſſe firmam, ſolidam, bene ſuffultam*, quæ excludit dubitationem.

The Fields of Corn, which a little while ago, were gracefully erect, or softly inclining to the Breeze, lay sunk and flatted under the impetuous Rains.—Such, added *Aspasio*, such I apprehend will be our Faith, if it is wholly separated from Assurance, or if its Assurance is erected on any Endowments of our own.

Ther. If this is the Case, what can be the Reason, why so many People are totally destitute of all religious Assurance? Have no Notion of it, much less aspire after it? Nay; would be much surprised, perhaps highly disgusted, at the very Mention of such a Doctrine.

Asp. If People never aspire after the Assurance of Faith, or an *appropriating* Interest in *CHRIST*, I very much question, whether they are truly awakened, or really in earnest. They are like the Men of *Ephraim*, whom the Prophet stiles *a Cake not turned* *; neither Bread, nor yet Dough; neither absolute Reprobates, nor real Saints. Or, as our LORD explains the Proverb, in his Charge against the Church of *Laodicea*, They are *neither hot nor cold* †. Not frozen in Insensibility, 'tis true; at the same Time, not fervent in Spirit; but indifferent and lukewarm in the Concerns of Religion.

Among the Reasons, why so few Persons attain this eminent Blessing, We may reckon the following.—They understand not the perfect *Freeness* of Grace, nor the *immensely* rich Merits of *CHRIST*.—They never consider the unspeakable *Value* of an assured Faith; neither are they aware, that it is for the Enjoyment of *Sinners*. Yes, of Sinners, even before they have one Mark of Reformation to

* Hos. vii. 8 † Rev. iii. 15.

ſhew, or the leaſt Evidence of any Goodneſs in Themſelves *.—Either they ſeek it not at all; or elſe they ſeek it, where it is not to be found; from ſome Works of Righteouſneſs in themſelves, rather than from the gracious Promiſe of GOD in his Word. Which is altogether as ill judged, and as ſure to iſſue in Diſappointment, as if a Perſon ſhould go in queſt of Ice amidſt the torrid Zone, or expect to find ſpicy Iſlands under the northern Pole.

But whether People conſider it or no, the Value of an aſſured Faith is indeed unſpeakable. When this is wrought in the Heart, Peace will ſtand firm, and Afflictions drop their Sting. Prayer will return laden with Treaſures, and Death will approach ſtripped of its Terrors. The Soul will be *as a watered Garden*, and all her Graces *bloſſom as a Roſe*.—When this is wrought in the Heart, the Goſpel of *CHRIST*, will appear with new Charms, and operate with new Energy. Its Hymns will no longer be a ſtrange Language to your Ear, nor its Privileges as forbidden Fruit to your Palate. You will then, as You peruſe each ſacred Page, feel it to be the Power of GOD, and *taſte that the LORD is gracious* †. You will reap a Benefit, and enjoy a Delight, as much ſuperior to thoſe of the doubting Reader; as the Pleaſure of *eating* this delicious Peach, is ſuperior to the mere Deſcription of its agreeable Reliſh.

Bear with me a Moment longer, *Theron*. For You can hardly imagine, what an Improvement and

* See MARSHAL's *Goſp. Myſt. Direct.* vii. and x. Where this Truth, little known, but very comfortable, is fully proved.

† 1 Pet. iii. 3.

and Exaltation this will give, to every *Truth* You contemplate, and every *Object* You behold.—When You contemplate the Riſe of Kingdoms, and the Fall of Empires; when You recollect the great and aſtoniſhing Events, recorded in the Hiſtory of Nations; how highly delightful, to ſay! "All theſe paſſed under the Superintendency of "*that Hand*, which was pierced with the bloody "Nail, and faſtened to the curſed Croſs for Me."—When You behold the Magnificence of Creation, and the Richneſs of its Furniture; the Grandeur of Nature, and the Variety of her Works; what a heightened Pleaſure muſt they all impart, if, as You view the glorious Scene, your Thoughts make Anſwer to your Eyes! "All theſe were "brought into Exiſtence by *that adorable* PER-"SON, who ſuſtained my Guilt, and wrought "out my juſtifying Righteouſneſs."

O! that We may receive, by Faith, this moſt bleſſed REDEEMER! O! that our Faith may grow inceſſantly, *grow exceedingly* *! Till it be *rooted*, like thoſe full-grown Oaks, under which We lately walked! and *grounded* †, like that well-built Edifice, which is ſtill in our View!

Ther. Moſt heartily I join in this Wiſh. O! that every Objection, for the future, may be ſuperſeded, as ſoon as ſtarted; and ſilenced, or ever it open its Mouth! I muſt beg of my Friend to inform me, how I may get the better of that unaccountable Miſtruſt and Diffidence, which I feel

* 2 Theſſ. i. 3.

† *Rooted and grounded*, ερριζωμενοι και τεθεμελιωμενοι. Theſe are the Apoſtle's beautiful Ideas, or rather expreſſive Similitudes, each comprehended in a ſingle Word. *Eph.* iii. 18.

in my Heart; and which have made me ſo eaſily ſuſceptible of unbelieving Impreſſions.

Aſp. You have entirely cured me, *Theron*, of making Apologies. Would to GOD, I might be as ſucceſsfully inſtrumental, in delivering my Friend from his Doubts! That the Goſpel might come to Us both, as it came to the *Theſſalonian Converts, not in Word only, but in Power, and in the HOLY GHOST, and in much Aſſurance* *!*

Prayer is one Expedient. Every good Gift is from above, and cometh down from the FATHER of Lights. *CHRIST* is not only the Object, but the Author and Finiſher of our Faith. *LORD, increaſe our Faith*, was the Requeſt of the Diſciples, and ſhould be the prevailing Language of our Hearts.

Faith cometh by hearing †, by meditating on, by praying over, this Word of Life, and Word of Grace. Lay up therefore many ſelect Portions of Scripture, many of the divine Promiſes in your Memory. Stock that noble Cabinet with this invaluable Treaſure.—And never, never forget the *Freeneſs*, with which the Promiſe is made, and its good Things are beſtowed. You are to receive the one, and apply the other, not with a full, but with an empty Hand; not as a righteous Perſon, but as an unworthy Creature.

Make the Trial. Exerciſe Yourſelf in this great Secret of true Godlineſs. I am ſatisfied, it will be productive of the moſt beneficial Effects.—Look unto *JESUS* as dying in *your* Stead, and purchaſing

* 1 Theſſ. i. 5.

† *Rom.* x. 17. On which Account the Scriptures are ſtiled, *The Words of Faith*, 1 *Tim.* iv. 6.

chaſing both Grace and Glory for *your* Enjoyment. Come unto GOD, as a poor Sinner, yet with a *confident* Dependence; expecting all ſpiritual Bleſſings, through HIM that loved *You*, and gave Himſelf for *You*.—*He that believeth*, with this appropriating Faith, *ſhall not be confounded* *, nor fruſtrated in his Expectations. *He that believeth*, with this appropriating Faith, *ſhall have the Witneſs in himſelf* †. Nothing will bring in ſuch Light and Peace, ſuch Holineſs and Happineſs to his Soul.—The *Epheſians*, thus believing, *were ſealed with that Holy SPIRIT of Promiſe* ‡. The diſperſed of *Iſrael*, thus believing, *rejoiced with Joy unſpeakable* ‖. Thoſe were *marked out* as rightful Heirs, Theſe were bleſſed bleſſed with ſome delightful *Foretaſtes*, and both were prepared for the complete Fruition, of Life and Immortality. O! that We may be Followers of their Example, and Sharers of their Felicity!

As for thoſe Doubts, which have given You ſo much Perplexity, and coſt Us ſo long a Diſquiſition, look upon them as ſome of your *greateſt Enemies*. Oppoſe them, with all the Reſolution and all the Vigour of your Mind.—Nay; look upon thoſe unreaſonable Doubts, as ſome of your *greateſt Sins*. Confeſs them, with the deepeſt Shame; and pray

* 1 Pet. ii. 6. † 1 John v. 10.

‡ *Eph.* i. 13. Πιστευσαντες εσφραγισθητε, not *After that Ye believed*; but *Believing Ye were ſealed*. In the Way of Believing, Ye became Partakers of this ſealing and ſanctifying SPIRIT. Conformably to the Expoſtulation of the Apoſtle on another Occaſion, *Received Ye the SPIRIT, by the Works of the Law, or by the Hearing of Faith?*

‖ 1 Pet. i. 8.

pray againſt them, with the utmoſt Ardour.—With equal Aſſiduity and Zeal, let Us preſs after a ſtedfaſt, an immoveable, a triumphant Faith.—Faith is the Vehicle and the Inſtrument of every Good; *All Things are poſſible to Him that believeth* *.—Faith is the immediate and grand End of the whole Goſpel; *Theſe Things are written that Ye might believe* †.—Let Us therefore covet, earneſtly let Us covet this beſt of Gifts, and *ſhew all Diligence to the* FULL ASSURANCE *of Faith* ‡, and the FULL ASSURANCE *of Hope* ‖—by the firſt, thankfully receiving preſent Pardon—by the laſt, joyfully expecting future Glory.

* Mark ix. 23. † John xx. 31. ‡ Heb. x. 22. ‖ Heb. vii. 11.

DIALOGUE XIX.

THE next Morning, *Theron*, ordered a cold Collation to be prepared, and his Pleaſure-Boat to hold itſelf in Readineſs.—Breakfaſt being diſpatched, and ſome neceſſary Orders, relating to the Family, given—Now, ſays He to *Aſpaſio*, let me fulfil my Promiſe; or rather let us execute our mutual Engagement; and conſign the Remainder of this mild and charming Day, to a rural Excurſion.

We will take our Route along one of the *fineſt Roads* in the World. A Road, incomparably more curious and durable, than the famous Cauſeys raiſed by thoſe puiſſant Hands, which conquered the Globe. A Road, which has ſubſiſted from the Beginning of Time; and, though frequented by innumerable Carriages, laden with the heavieſt Burdens, has never been gulled, never wanted Repair, to this very Hour.—Upon this, they ſtep into the Chariot, and are conveyed to a large *navigable River*, about three Quarters of a Mile diſtant from the Houſe.—Here they

they launch upon a new Element, attended by two or three Servants, expert at handling the Oar, and managing the Nets.

Is this the Road, replied *Aſpaſio*, on which my Friend beſtows his Panegyric! It is indeed more curious in its Structure, and more durable in its Subſtance, than the celebrated *Romon* Cauſeys. Though I muſt aſſure you, the latter have a very diſtinguiſhed Share of my Eſteem. I admire them far beyond *Trajan*'s Pillar, or *Caracalla*'s Baths; far beyond the idle Pomp of the *Pantheon*, or the more than idle Magnificence of the *Amphitheatre*. They do the trueſt Honour to the Empire; becauſe, while they were the Glory of *Rome*, they were a general Good *; and not only a Monument of her Grandeur, but a Benefit to Mankind.

More than all theſe Works, I admire that excellent and divinely gracious Purpoſe, to which Providence made the Empire itſelf ſubſervient. It was a kind of Road or Cauſey, for the everlaſting Goſpel. It afforded the Word of Life a free and expeditious Paſſage, to the very Ends of the Earth. The *evangelical* Dove mounted the Wings of the *Roman* Eagle; and flew with ſurpriſing Rapidity, through all Nations.—Who would have thought, that inſatiable Ambition and the moſt bloody Wars, ſhould

* Theſe Roads ran through all *Italy*, and ſtretched themſelves into the Territories of *France*. They were carried acroſs the *Alps*, the *Pyrenean* Mountains, and through the whole Kingdom of *Spain*. Some of them, towards the South, reached even to *Æthiopia*; and ſome of them, towards the North, extended as far as *Scotland*. The Remains of ſeveral of them continue in *England* to this Day; though they were made, it is probable, above 1600 Years ago.

should be paving a Way for the PRINCE of Humility and Peace? How remote from all human Apprehenſion, was ſuch a Deſign; and how contrary to the natural Reſult of Things, was ſuch an Event! Moſt remarkably therefore was that Obſervation of the Pſalmiſt verified: *His Ways are in the Sea, and his Paths in the great Waters, and his Footſteps are not known* *.

Converſing on ſuch agreeable Subjects, they are carried by the Stream, through no leſs agreeable Scenes. They paſs by Hills, clothed with hanging Woods; and Woods, arrayed in varying Green. Here, excluded from a Sight of the out-ſtretched Plains, they are entertained with a Group of *unſubſtantial* Images, and the Wonders of a *mimic* Creation.—Another Sun ſhines, but ſtript of his blazing Beams, in the watery Concave. While Clouds ſail along the downward Skies, and ſometimes diſcloſe, ſometimes draw a Veil over, the radiant Orb. Trees, with their inverted Tops, either flouriſh in the fair Serene below; or elſe paint, with a pleaſing Deluſion, the pellucid Flood. Even the Mountains are there, but in a headlong Poſture. Notwithſtanding their prodigious Bulk, they quiver in this floating Mirror, like the poplar Leaves which adorn their Sides.

Soon as the Boat advances, and diſturbs the placid Surface; the Waves, puſhed haſtily to the Bank, bear off, in broken Fragments, the *liquid Landſchape*. The ſpreading Circles ſeemed to propheſy, as they rolled; and pronounced the Pleaſures of this preſent State—the Pomp of Power, the Charm of Beauty, and the Echo of Fame—pronounced them *tranſient*, as

* Pſal. lxxvii. 19.

as their ſpeedy Paſſage; *empty*, as their unreal Freight.—Seemed to propheſy? It was more. Imagination heard them utter, as they ran;

Thus paſs the ſhadowy Scenes of Life away!

Emerging from this fluid Alley, formed and overhung by Rocks and Trees, they enter the Level of an extenſive Meadow. The Eye, lately *immured*, (though in pleaſurable Confinement) now expands her View, into a Space almoſt boundleſs, and amidſt Objects little ſhort of innumerable.—Tranſported for a while, at the wonderful Variety of beauteous Images, poured in ſweet Confuſion all around, ſhe hardly knows, where to fix, or which to purſue. Recovering, at length, from the pleaſing Perplexity; ſhe glances, quick and inſtantaneous, acroſs the intermediate Plain, and marks the diſtant *Mountains*. How Cliffs climb over Cliffs, till the huge Ridges gain upon the Sky. How their diminiſhed Summits ſtand dreſſed in Blue, or wraped in Clouds. While all their leafy Structures, and all their fleecy Tenants, are loſt in Air.

Soon ſhe quits theſe aerial Heights, and ranges the ruſſet *Heath:* here, ſhagged with Brakes, or tufted with Ruſhes: there, interſperſed with ſtraggling Thickets, or ſolitary Trees; which ſeem, like diſaffected Partiſans, to ſhun each other's Shade.—A *Spire*, placed in a remote Valley, peeps over the Hills. *Senſe*, ſurpriſed at the amuſive Appearance, is ready to ſuſpect, that the Column riſes, like ſome inchanted Edifice, from the rifted Earth. But *Reaſon* looks upon it, as the Earneſt of a hidden Vale, and the ſure Indication of an adjacent Town. Performing, in this Reſpect, much the ſame Office

to the Eye, as *Faith* executes with regard to the Soul, when it is *the Evidence of Things not ſeen* *.

Next, they rove, in eager and delighted Survey, over many a ſpacious Tract. Where the fertile Glebe ſpontaneouſly thrives; or the *cultured* Field, more than anſwers the Huſbandman's Hopes. Where Cattle, of every graceful Form, and every valuable Quality, crop the tender Herb, or drink the cryſtal Rills.—Here, they ſee in Reality, what thoſe inimitable Lines had often ſhewed them in Deſcription; *Thou crowneſt the Year with thy Goodneſs, and thy Paths drop Fatneſs. They drop upon the Dwellings of the Wilderneſs and little Hills are girded with Joy. The Paſtures are clothed with Flocks; the Vallies alſo are covered with Corn; they ſhout, yea, they ſing* †.

Anon, they contemplate, with increaſing Satisfaction, *Cities* of Opulence and Splendour. Which ſpread the ſacred Dome, and lift the ſocial Roof. Where the Senate-Houſe and Exchange detain the Sight, with their majeſtic Dimenſions; and awaken in the Mind the more venerable Ideas, of Juſtice adminiſtered, and of Commerce abounding. Cities, no longer ſurrounded with the ſtern forbidding Majeſty,

* Heb. xi. 1.

† *Pſal.* lxv. 11, 12, 13. This, I think, is the fineſt Deſcription of rural Affluence, and rural Proſperity, that Poetry or Language can boaſt.—There is ſomething in our Tranſlation of the laſt Clauſe, a certain *Curioſa Felicitas*, which exceeds, if I miſtake not, even the Beauty of the Original. *The Vallies alſo ſhall ſtand ſo thick with Corn, that they ſhall* laugh and ſing. The Idea of *ſmiling* or *laughing* ſeems, more happily than all other Images, to comport with the placid joyous Aſpect of a Country, flouriſhing under the ſereneſt Skies, and baſking in the Lap of Plenty.

jeſty, of unpaſſable Intrenchments, and impregnable Ramparts; but incircled with the delicate, the inviting Appendages of Gardens and Orchards. *Thoſe*, decked with all the ſoft Graces of Art and Elegance; *theſe*, bluſhing and pregnant with the more ſubſtantial Treaſures of fruitful Nature.—Wreaths of aſcending Smoke, intermingled with Turrets and lofty Pinnacles, ſeem to contend which ſhall get *fartheſt* from the Earth, and *neareſt* to the Skies. Happy for the Inhabitants! if ſuch was the habitual Tendency of their Deſires *; if no other Contention was known in their Streets.

Villas,

* This Compariſon, I think, cannot appear vulgar to thoſe Perſons, who have read, and who reverence, *The Book of Canticles*. There, the Church, aſcending continually in devout Affections to her beloved *JESUS*, and to her heavenly Home, is characterized by this very Similitude. *Who is this that cometh out of the Wilderneſs like Pillars of Smoke?* Cant. iii. 6.—Though it muſt be confeſſed, that this Similitude, like many of the Illuſtrations uſed in Scripture, might have a Sort of *local* Propriety; peculiar to the People of that Age, Country, and Religion. It might probably refer to thoſe Columns of Smoke, which aroſe from the *Burnt-offering*, or fumed from the Altar of *Incenſe*. If ſo, this Circumſtance muſt give a Solemnity and Dignity to the Idea, of which many Readers are not at all aware, and which indeed no modern Reader can fully conceive.

May I take leave to mention another Compariſon of this Kind? *The Enemies of the LORD ſhall conſume as the Fat of Lambs; yea, even as the Smoke ſhall they conſume away.* Pſal. xxxvii. 20.—*As the Fat of Lambs*; is not, to *Us*, a ſtriking Repreſentation. But to thoſe, who attended the Altar; who ſaw the unctuous and moſt combuſtible Parts of the Victim, blazing in the ſacred Fire; it preſented a very lively Image. Which became ſtill more appoſite and ſignificant, if this *Pſalm* was ſung, (as ſome evidently was, 2 *Chron.* xxix. 27, 28.) while the

Villas, elegant and magnificent, ſeated in the Center of an ample Park, or removed to the Extremity of a lengthened Lawn: not far from a beautiful Reſervoir of ſtanding Waters, or the more ſalutary Lapſe of a limpid Stream.—*Villages*, clad in homely Thatch, and lodged in the Boſom of cluſtering Trees. Ruſtics, ſinging at their Work; Shepherds, tuning their Pipes, as they tend their Flocks; Travellers, purſuing each his reſpective Way, in eaſy and joyous Security.

How pleaſing, ſaid *Aſpaſio*, is *our* Situation! How delightful is the Aſpect of all Things! One would almoſt imagine, that nothing could exceed it, and that nothing can increaſe it. Yet there is a Method of *increaſing* even this copious Delight, and of *heightening* even this exquiſite Pleaſure.—Let me deſire my Friend, anſwered *Theron*, to explain his Remark; and not only to explain, but to exemplify.—If We view, reſumed *Aſpaſio*, our own *proſperous*, and compare it with the *afflicted* Condition of Others, the Method I propoſe, will be reduced to Practice. Such a dark and mournful Contraſt, muſt throw additional Brightneſs, even upon the brighteſt Scene.

the Sacrifice continued burning.—None, I believe, in ſuch a Caſe, could forbear either to obſerve or to admire the beautiful *Gradation*: "The Enemies of the LORD "ſhall periſh as yonder *Fat*, which is ſo eaſily ſet on fire; "and, when once in a Flame, is ſo ſpeedily conſumed. "Nay, they ſhall be as the *Smoke*, which is ſtill more "tranſient. Whoſe light unſubſtantial Wreaths, but "juſt make their Appearance to the Eye; and, in a "Moment, vaniſh into empty Air."

Above, the Skies ſmile with Serenity; below, the Fields look gay with Plenty; all around, the ſportive Gales

Fanning their odoriferous Wings, diſpenſe
Native Perfumes; and whiſper, whence they ſtole
Thoſe balmy Spoils *.

With Us all Circumſtances are as *eaſy*, as the Wafture of the Boat; as *ſmooth*, as the Flow of the Stream.—But let Us not forget thoſe grievous Calamities, which befal our Brethren, in ſome remote Tracts of the Earth, or diſtant Parts of the Ocean. How many Sailors are ſtruggling, vainly ſtruggling, with all the Fury of rending Winds, and daſhing Waves! While their Veſſel, flung to and fro by *tempeſtuous* Billows, is mounted into the Clouds, or plunged into the Abyſs. Poſſibly, the miſerable Crew hear their Knell ſounded, in the ſhattered Maſt; and ſee Deſtruction entering, at the burſting Planks. Perhaps, this very Moment, they pour the laſt, diſmal, dying Shriek; and ſink, irrecoverably ſink, in the all-overwhelming Surge.—The Traveller, in *Africa*'s barren Waſtes, (pale, even amidſt thoſe glowing Regions; pale with prodigious Conſternation) ſees ſudden Mountains riſe, and roll on every Side. He ſees the ſultry Deſart, aſcending the Sky, and ſweeping before the Whirlwind. What can he do? Whither fly? How eſcape the approaching Ruin? Alas! while He attempts to rally his Thoughts; attempts to deviſe ſome feeble Expedient; He is overtaken by the choking Storm, and ſuffocated amidſt the *ſandy Inundation*. The driving Heaps are, now, his Executioner; as the drifted Heaps will, ſoon, be his Tomb.

While

* MILTON, Book IV.

While *We* poſſeſs the valuable Privileges, and taſte the delicious Sweets of *Liberty*, how many Partakers of our common Nature, are condemned to perpetual Exile, or chained to the Oar for Life! How many are immured in the Gloom of Dungeons, or buried in the Caverns of the Mines; never to behold the all-enlivening Sun again!—While Reſpect waits upon our Perſons, and Reputation attends our Characters: are there not ſome unhappy Creatures, led forth by the Hand of *vindictive Juſtice*, to be Spectacles of Horror, and Monuments of Vengeance? Sentenced, for their enormous Crimes, to be broke Limb by Limb on the Wheel, or to be impaled alive on the lingering Stake. To theſe, the ſtrangling Cord, or the deadly Stab, would be a moſt welcome Favour. But they muſt feel a *thouſand* Deaths, in undergoing *one*. And this, too probably, is but the Beginning of their Sorrows; will only conſign them over to infinitely more terrible Torment;

*To waſte eternal Days in Woe and Pain**.

While Eaſe and Pleaſure, in ſweet Conjunction, ſmooth our Paths, and ſoften our Couch: how many are toſſing on the Fever's fiery Bed, or toiling along Affliction's thorny Road! Some, under the *excruciating*, but neceſſary Operations of Surgery: their Bodies ripped open, with a dreadful Inciſion, to ſearch for the torturing Stone; or their Limbs loped off by the bloody Knife, to prevent the Mortication's fatal Spread. Some *emaciated* by pining Sickneſs, are deprived of all their animal Vigour; and transformed into Spectres, even before their

* MILTON.

Diſſolution *. They are ready to adopt the Complaint of the *Pſalmiſt*; *I am withered like Graſs*; *my Bones are burnt up, as it were a Firebrand*; *I go hence like the Shadow that departeth.* While *Health*, that ſtaple Bleſſing; which gives every other Entertainment its Flavour and its Beauty; adds the Gloſs to all We ſee, and the Poignancy to all We taſte; Health plays at our Hearts; Health dances in our Spirits; and mantles in our Cheeks, as the generous Champagne lately ſparkled in our Glaſs.

We are bleſt with a calm Poſſeſſion of Ourſelves; with Tranquility in our Conſciences, and an habitual Harmony in our Temper. Whereas many, in the dark and doleful *Cells* of *Lunacy*, are gnaſhing their Teeth or wringing their Hands; rending the Air with Vollies of horrid Execrations, or burdening it with Peals of diſconſolate Sighs. And O! what Multitudes, even amidſt Courts and Palaces, are held in *ſplendid Vaſſalage*, by their own domineering Paſſions, or the Vanities of a bewitching World. Far leſs innocently, far more deplorably diſordered †, than the fettered Madman, they are

* A very little Excurſion of Thought will eaſily convince the Reader, that there is no Period of Time, in which ſome of theſe Calamities do not befal our Fellow-creatures, in one Part of the World or another.

† *Give me any Plague*, ſays an apocryphal Writer, *but the Plague of the Heart*, Ecclus. xxv. 13. Upon which judicious and weighty Apophthegm, *Maſiniſſa*'s Speech in Mr. *Thomſon*'s *Sophoniſba*, is a very pertinent and affecting Paraphraſe.

O! ſave me from the Tumult of the Soul!
From the wild Beaſt within!—For, circling Sands,
When the ſwift Whirlwind whelms them o'er the Lands;

The

are gnawed by the envenomed Tooth of Envy; they are agitated by the wild Sallies of Ambition; or feel the malignant Ulcer of Jealouſy, rankling in their Breaſts. In Some, Avarice, like a ravening Harpy, gripes. In Some, Revenge, like an implacable Fury, rages. While Others are goaded by lordly and imperious Luſts, through the lotheſome *Sewers* of impure Delight; and left, at laſt, in thoſe hated and execrable *Dens*, where Remorſe rears her ſnaky Creſt, and Infamy ſharpens her hiſſing Tongue. — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — —

Why this long Pauſe? replied *Theron*. Your Obſervations are as uſeful, as they are juſt. We ſhould all be acquainted, at leaſt in Speculation acquainted, with Grief; and ſend our Thoughts, if not our Feet, to viſit the Abodes of Sorrow.—That, in this School, We may learn a ſympathizing Pity, for our diſtreſſed Fellow-creatures; and ſee, in this Glaſs, our inexpreſſible Obligations to the diſtinguiſhing Goodneſs of Providence. Which has crowned our Table with Abundance, and repleniſhed our Cup with Delicacies; permitting neither Penury to ſtint the Draught, nor Adverſity to mingle her Gall.—Go on, I muſt intreat You, with your Deſcription of *comparative Felicity*. We have a large Circuit ſtill to make, before We arrive at our intended

The roaring Deeps, that to the Clouds ariſe,
While thwarting thick the mingled Lightning flies;
The Monſter-brood, to which this Land gives Birth,
The blazing City, and the gaping Earth;
All Deaths, all Tortures in one Pang combin'd,
Are gentle *to the Tempeſt of the Mind.*

tended Port. And I could wiſh, that your Diſcourſe might keep pace with the Current.

Since You approve the Subject, anſwered *Aſpaſio*, I will purſue it a little farther.—We, the Inhabitants of this favoured Iſle, breathe an Air of the moſt *agreeable* Temperature, and moſt *wholeſome* Qualities. But how many Nations languiſh in a torrid Clime, vaulted as it were with Fire? They welter amidſt thoſe Furnaces of the Sun, till their "Viſage is burnt, and black as a Coal *."—What is far more diſaſtrous, Beds of Sulphur and combuſtible Materials, lie in ſubterraneous Ambuſh, ready to ſpring the *irreſiſtible Mine*. Ere long—perhaps, on ſome Day of univerſal Feſtivity †, or in ſome Night of deep Repoſe—to be touched by Heaven's avenging Hand.—Then, with what outrageous Violence will they burſt! Rock the Foundations

* Lam. iv. 8.

† There is a remarkable Paſſage in *Pſal.* lviii. 9. which ſeems to denote ſome ſuch *unexpected*, but *ſpeedy* and *inevitable* Doom. The Senſe is darkened, not a little, by the Verſion admitted into our Liturgy. I believe, the true Tranſlation may be ſeen in the following *Italics*, and the true Meaning learnt from the *interwoven* Paraphraſe. —Speedily, or *before your Pots can perceive the* Warmth of blazing *Thorns*, *ſhall HE* that ruleth over all, ſweep away the Wicked: *ſweep him away by* a Stroke of righteous *Indignation*, as by a fierce and mighty Tempeſt; ſo that, *even from* the Fulneſs of his Sufficiency, and the Height of his *Proſperity*, He ſhall be plunged into utter Deſtruction.—The Word חי, which is very improperly tranſlated, *A Thing that is raw*, ſignifies a State of *Proſperity* or *pleaſurable Enjoyment*. 1 Sam. xxv. 6.—The whole Verſe, in a Gradation of ſtriking Images, gives Us a moſt awful Diſplay of divine Vengeance. Vengeance quite ſudden; utterly irreſiſtible; and overtaking the ſecure Sinner, amidſt all the Careſſes of, what the World calls, *Fortune*.

dations of Nature! Wrench open the ponderous Jaws of Earth! And ſwallow up aſtoniſhed Cities, in the dark, tremendous, cloſing Chaſm!

Theſe *Earthquakes*, it may be, both precede and portend, *the Peſtilence that walketh in Darkneſs, and the Sickneſs that deſtroyeth at Noon-day**. They are, at once, a fearful Omen, and a ruinous Blow. The ſtagnating Atmoſphere, rank with malignant Vapours, becomes a Source of deadly Infection: or, replete with poiſonous Animalcules, is one vaſt incumbent Cloud of *living Bane*. If the active Gales ariſe, they ariſe only to ſtir the Seeds of Diſeaſe, and diffuſe the fatal Contagion far and near.—Unhappy People! The *Plague*, that ſevere Miniſter of divine Indignation, fixes her Head-quarters in their blaſted Provinces; and ſends Death abroad, on his pale Horſe †, to empty their Houſes, depopulate their Towns, and croud their Graves.

Our Iſland is ſeldom viſited with either of theſe dreadful Judgments; and has never ſuſtained any very conſiderable Calamity from the former. However, let Us not be preſumptuouſly ſecure. We have, not long ago, received an awful Warning. The Rod has been ſhaken, or rather the Sword has been brandiſhed, over our Territories.—Who can forget the general Conſternation, which ſeized our *Metropolis*, on Occaſion of the late Earthquake? And not without Reaſon. For, of all divine Viſitations, this is the moſt terribly vindictive. The Whirlwind is *ſlow* in its Progreſs; War is *gentle* in its Aſſaults; even the raging Peſtilence is a *mild* Rebuke; compared with the Fury of an Earthquake. — The Earthquake neither gives

* Pſal. xci. 6. † Rev. vi. 8.

Warning, nor allows Quarter. Suddenly it comes, in a moſt unexpected Moment; and ſpreads undiſtinguiſhed Ruin. Amazing Blow! From which there is no Method of Defence, and no Place of Refuge. Deſtructive Viſitation! Which rends the firmeſt, overwhelms the ſtatelieſt Works; and puts an End, in a few Minutes, to the Labour of Ages.

Should almighty Vengeance ſtir up again thoſe fierce ſubterranean Commotions: ſhould the moſt high GOD bid ſtrong Convulſions tear the Bowels of Nature, and make the Foundations of the World tremble like a Leaf: What, *O ye careleſs ones* *, What will You do? Whither will You fly?—See! the Pavement ſinks under your Feet. Your Houſes are tottering over your Heads. The Ground, on every Side, cracks and opens like a gaping Grave; or heaves and ſwells like a rolling Sea. *A Noiſe of Craſhing* † is heard from without, occaſioned by the rending Streets, and falling Structures. Thunders, infernal Thunders ‡, bellow from beneath; mingled with deſpairing Shrieks, and dying Groans. Shrieks and Groans from thoſe wretched Creatures, who are jammed between the cloſing Earth, or going down alive into the horrible Pit ‖.—Where how will You fly? To your ſtrong

* Iſai. xxxii. 11. † Zeph. i. 10.

‡ Before the Overthrow of *Catania* by an Earthquake, a Noiſe was heard, vaſt and horrid, as if all the Artillery in the World was diſcharged at once.

‖ Very memorable, and equally tremendous, is the Account of the Earthquake, which viſited *Sicily*, in the Year 1693.—It ſhook the whole Iſland. The Miſchief it cauſed, is amazing. Fifty-four Cities and Towns, beſide an incredible Number of Villages, were either demoliſhed,

ſtrong Towers? They are ſhattered Pieces.—To the ſtronger Rocks? They are thrown out of their Place.—To the open Fields? They are a frightful Gulph, yawning to devour You.—Where-ever You fly;

demoliſhed, or greatly damaged. *Catania*, one of the moſt famous and flouriſhing Cities in the Kingdom, was entirely deſtroyed. Of 18,914 Inhabitants, 18,000 periſhed.

Another Earthquake, almoſt as dreadful, and in the ſame Year, ſpread Deſolation through the Colony of *Jamaica*. In two Minutes Time, it ſhook down, and laid under Water, nine Tenths of the Town of *Port-royal*. In leſs than a Minute, three Quarters of the Houſes, and the Ground they ſtood on, together with the Inhabitants, were quite ſunk: and the little Part left behind, was no better than Heaps of Rubbiſh.—The Shake was ſo violent, that it threw People down upon their Knees, or their Faces, as they were running about for Shelter. The Ground heaved and ſwelled, like a rolling Sea; and ſeveral Houſes, ſtill ſtanding, were ſhuffled ſome Yards out of their Places. The Earth would crack and yawn; would open and ſhut, quick and faſt. Of which horrid Openings, two or three hundred might be ſeen at once. In ſome whereof, the People went down, and were ſeen no more. In ſome they deſcended, and roſe again in other Streets, or in the Middle of the Harbour. Some ſwiftly cloſing, ſeized the miſerable Creatures, and preſſed them to death; leaving their Heads, or half their Bodies above Ground, to be a Spectacle of Terror, and a Prey to Dogs. Out of others would iſſue whole Rivers of Water, ſpouted to a great Height in the Air, and threatening a Deluge to that Part, which the Earthquake ſpared—Scarce a Planting-houſe or Sugar-work was left ſtanding in all the Iſland. Two thouſand Lives were loſt, and a thouſand Acres of Land ſunk. The whole was attended with frightful Noiſes, with brimſtone Blaſts, and offenſive Smells. The noiſome Vapours belched forth, corrupted the Air, and brought on a general Sickneſs; which ſwept away more than three thouſand of thoſe, who eſcaped the Fury of the Earthquake. *See* CHAMB. *Dict.* on the Word *Earthquake*.

fly; in the Wilderneſs of your Diſtraction, whenever you ſeek for Shelter: It ſhall be, *as if a Man fled from a Lion, and a Bear met Him; or went into the Houſe, and leaned his Hand upon the Wall, and a Serpent bit Him* *.

I ſaid, "There is no Place of Refuge." But I retract the Expreſſion. *One* Place there is, which will prove an inviolable Sanctuary, and a perfect Security. I mean, the great, the gracious, the adorable REDEEMER's Righteouſneſs. Hither let Us betake ourſelves. Now, before the Day of Deſolation cometh, now let us betake Ourſelves to *this Strong-hold*. Then, ſhall We have no Reaſon to fear, though the Earth be moved, and though the Hills be carried into the Midſt of the Sea. For thus ſaith GOD, the omnipotent and faithful GOD; *The Sun and the Moon ſhall be darkened, and the Stars ſhall withdraw their Shining. The LORD alſo*, amidſt this deep and diſmal Gloom, *ſhall roar out of Sion; and utter his Voice*, laden with Horror and prophetic Deſtruction, *from Jeruſalem. The Heavens* above, *and the Earth* beneath, and all created Nature, *ſhall ſhake*. But the true Believer may ſtand erect and undiſmayed. Becauſe *the LORD*, who dwells in the Darkneſs, and preſides over the Storm; the LORD JESUS Himſelf *will be the Hope of his People*, to inſpire them with a noble Confidence; *and the Strength of his Children* †, to be their Safeguard in every Danger.

Or, if the true Believer is involved, in the *ſame* promiſcuous Ruin with the Ungodly; even this ſhall turn to his Gain. It ſhall exempt Him *from* the lingering Pains, and the melancholy Solemnities

* Amos v. 19. † Joel iii. 15, 16.

ies of a dying Bed. Like *Elijah*'s fiery Chariot, it hall waft his Soul, with Speed and Safety, to the Boſom of his SAVIOUR. While the hideous Cavern, that whelms his Body in the Center, ſhall be its Chamber of Reſt, till the beloved BRIDEGROOM comes, and the Day of Reſurrection dawns.

We lift up our Eyes, and behold the radiant Colours, which fluſh the Forehead of the Morning. We turn, and gaze upon the no leſs beautiful Tinges, which impurple the Brow of Evening. We throw around our View, and are delighted with numberleſs Forms of Fertility, which both decorate and enrich our Plains.—Whereas, other Countries are darkened with Clouds, or over-run with Swarms of *Locuſts*. Which intercept, where-ever they fly, the fair Face of Day; and deſtroy, where-ever they alight, the green Treaſures of the Ground *.

Ah!

* Fearful and aſtoniſhing is the Account, which Travellers have given Us, with relation to theſe Animals. *Thavenot* informs Us; "That they fly in the Air toge-" ther, all compact, like a vaſt Cloud; ſometimes fif-" teen or eighteen Miles long, and about ten or twelve " Miles broad. So that they quite darken the Sky, " and make the brighteſt Day obſcure. Wherever they " light, they devour all the Corn in leſs than two Hours, " and frequently make a Famine in the Country."

Their Names, in the ſacred Language, are moſt exactly ſignificant of their two diſtinguiſhing Properties. אַרְבֶּה denotes an exceeding great, a numberleſs *Multitude*. יֶלֶק ſignifies to make clean and bare; as when ſome hungry Animal, has both devoured the Fleſh, and *licked* the Bone.—Adored be the divine Providence! That We learn the Character of theſe hideous Inſects, not from ſorrowful Experience, but only from harmleſs Narrative.

Ah! what avails it, that the laborious Hind ſows his Acres; or the ſkilful Huſbandman prunes his Vineyard? That Spring, with her prolific Moiſture, ſwells the Bud; or, with her delicate Pencil, paints the Bloſſom? Nor Grain, nor Fruit, can hope for Maturity; while theſe *rapacious* and *baleful* Creatures infeſt the Neighbourhood. They ravage the Gardens, and plunder the Fields. They ſtrip the Trees, and ſhave the Meadows. Scarce a ſingle Leaf remains on the Boughs, or ſo much as a ſingle Stalk in the Furrows. *A Fire devoureth before them, and behind them a Flame burneth: the Land is as the Garden of Eden before them, and behind them a deſolate Wilderneſs: yea, and nothing can eſcape them* *.

Now, let the dreadful Artillery roar from all its iron Throats, and diſgorge the heavieſt Glut of mortal Hail. Now, Ye Sons of Slaughter; Men *ſkilful to deſtroy* †; now hurl the ſulphureous Globes, which kindle into a Hurricane of Fire, and burſt in ragged Inſtruments of Ruin.—To no Purpoſe. The linked Thunderbolts are turned into Stubble; the burſting Bombs are accounted as Straw. Theſe Armies of the Air, laugh at all the formidable Preparations of War: *and when they fall on the Sword, they*

* *A Fire devoureth before them, and behind them a Flame burneth*, Joel ii. 3. This is one of thoſe *bold* and *expreſſive* Metaphors, in which the *Hebrew* Language delights, and by which it is eminently diſtinguiſhed. It ſignifies a *total Devaſtation* of the vegetable Produce. Such as muſt enſue, if a raging and reſiſtleſs Fire attended the Progreſs of theſe pernicious Animals: burning with ſuch vehement Impetuoſity, that None could quench it; ſpreading ſuch extenſive Havock, that nothing could eſcape it.

† Ezek. xxi. 31.

they ſhall not be wounded *.—Surpriſing and awful Deſtination of the everlaſting GOD! At once, to ſtain the Pride, and chaſtiſe the Guilt of Man! Theſe are a deſpicable and puny Race; clad in no Coat of Mail, but cruſhed by the ſlighteſt Touch. They wear neither Sword, nor Scymetar, nor any offenſive Weapon. Yet, in ſpite of oppoſing Legions, they carry on their Depredations, and puſh their Conqueſts. *Terror* marches in their Front, and *Famine* brings up the Rear. They ſpread univerſal Devaſtation, as they advance; and frequently give the Signal, for the Peſtilence to follow. Potent Armies loſe their Hands, and haughty Tyrants tremble for their Dominions.

O! that the Natives of *Great-Britain* would bethink themſelves! Would break off their Sins by beleiving in the Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, and their Iniquities by cheriſhing the Influences of his Divine SPIRIT! Leſt this *overflowing Scourge*,

* The Prophet *Joel*, foretelling the Plague of *Locuſts*, gives, under the Image of an *embattled Hoſt*, a moſt alarming Diſplay, of their terrible Appearance; their impetuous Progreſs; the horrible Dread they raiſe, as they advance; and the irreparable Miſchief they leave, as they depart. Adding, among other amazing Circumſtances, *When they fall upon the Sword, they ſhould not be wounded.* Which implies, I apprehend, that no Method of Slaughter ſhould prove deſtructive to their Troops; or, that every Expedient, contrived for their Suppreſſion, ſhould be utterly baffled. Being, through their immenſe Numbers as *invincible*, as if every one was abſolutely *invulnerable*. For, though Millions and Millions ſhould periſh, by the Weapons of War; even ſuch a Blow, in reference to their whole *collective* Body, ſhould ſcarce be perceived as a Loſs, ſcarce be felt as a Wound; neither diminiſhing their Strength, nor retarding their March. *Joel* ii. 8.

Scourge *, under which ſome neighbouring Kingdoms have ſeverely ſmarted, ſhould be commiſſioned to viſit *our* Borders, and avenge the Quarrel of its MAKER's Honour.—Diſtant as thoſe countleſs Legions are; though ſeparated from Us by interpoſing Seas; yet, if GOD lift up a Standard from far, or but hiſs † unto them from the

* שוט שוטף *Overflowing Scourge*, Iſai. xxviii. 15. It is the Property of a Scourge to *laſh*, of a River to *overflow*. The ſacred Writer (by a moſt elegant *Alliteration*, which beautifies the Original, but cannot be preſerved in the Tranſlation) has connected theſe different Ideas and different Effects. The vindictive Viſitation, with which He threatens the diſobedient *Jews*, ſhall *pierce deep* as a Scourge, and *ſpread wide* as an Inundation. They ſhall feel it in all their Intereſts, and feel it at their very Soul. It ſhall involve the whole Nation in Miſery, Anguiſh, and Ruin.

There ſeems to be ſuch a Form of Expreſſion in the Service of our Church. When We pray, in behalf of our Fellow-chriſtians; "*pour* upon them the continual "*Dew* of thy Bleſſing." That which may be refreſhing and ſalutary as the Dew, yet copious and abundant as the Shower.

† *Hiſs unto them*, Iſai. v. 26. With great Significancy, and peculiar Grandeur, the Prophet applies this Expreſſion to the LORD GOD of Hoſts, influencing the moſt powerful Armies, *q. d.* "They come, without a "Moment's Delay, and, from the remoteſt Regions of "the Earth, to execute all his Pleaſure. Formidable "and innumerable as they are, they come—I ſay not, "upon his repeated Injunctions, or at his ſtrict Com-"mand—but at the firſt, the very *ſmalleſt* Intimation of "his Will."—Such as the Shepherds uſed to their Flocks; ſuch as the Bee-men, of old, to their Swarms; or ſuch as We, in theſe Days, to ſome of our domeſtic Animals.—The Hebrew שרק I would not tranſlate, *At his Whiſtle*; becauſe this Phraſe, in our Language, creates a vulgar Sound, and conveys a low Idea: but ſuch

the Ends of the Earth; *they come with Speed ſwiftly.* —Who will convey my Wiſh to the Ears, who will tranſmit it to the Hearts, of my Countrymen? That our Land may always appear, as it does at preſent, like the Darling of Providence. May always reſound with the Voice of Joy, and be filled with the Fruits of Plenty. May always wear the Robe of Beauty, and be adorned with the Smile of Peace.

How great are the Advantages of *Peace!* ſaid *Theron.* Peace at her Leiſure plans, and leads out Induſtry to execute, all the noble and commodious Improvements, which We behold on every Side. Peace ſets the Mark of Property on our Poſſeſſions, and bids Juſtice guarrantee them to our Enjoyment. Peace ſpreads over Us the Banner of the Laws, while We taſte, free from Outrage, and ſecure from Injury, the Milk and Honey of our honeſt Toil *.—Amidſt the tumultuous Confuſions of *War*,

ſuch is the Import of the Original. Which denotes all that *unconcerned Eaſe* of Action, without any of the *offenſive Familiarity* of Diction.

* *Pax optima Rerum*, ſays the *Latin* Poet.—But the *Orientals*, I think, diſcover the moſt ſuperlative Eſteem for this Bleſſing, by making it the conſtant Form of their Salutations, and the Subject of their moſt cordial Wiſhes for their Friends; PEACE BE UNTO THEE —In this *ſhort Sentence*, they ſeem to have compriſed a *whole Volume* of Mercies: meaning, by their ſingle שלום all that the *Greeks* expreſſed by their χαιρειν υγιαινειν, ευπραττειν; i. e. A Confluence of that Joy of Mind, that Health of Body, that Proſperity of outward Circumſtances, which *complete* the Happineſs of Mankind.

We have a fine Deſcription of Peace, and its various Bleſſings, 1 *Maccab.* xiv. 8, 9, &c. The Picture is very

War, who could have a Heart to contrive, or Hand to accomplish, any such Works of Dignit and Use? In those Days of Darkness and Distrac tion, how languid to the Sight are all the dew Landschapes of Spring? How insipid to the Tast are all the delicious Flavours of Autumn?—When the Nation is over-run with Armies, and embroiled in Slaughter, *a trembling Heart, and Failing of Eyes, and Sorrow of Mind* *, are the dismal Distinction of the Times. Instead of a calm Acquiescence in our Portion, our very Life hangs in continual Suspense.

But what are all the Benefits of *external* Peace, though displayed in the fairest Light, and enlivened by the strongest Contrasts—What are they all, compared with the Blessings of the Gospel? By which Sinners may have *Peace with GOD through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.*

This, resumed *Aspasio*, suggests a fresh Instance of Happiness, which others want, and *We* possess; an Instance, never to be omitted in our Catalogue of peculiar Mercies. I might add, never to be forgotten, by any *Christian*, on any Occasion.—While many Kingdoms of the Earth, are ignorant of the true GOD, and know neither the Principles of Piety, nor the Paths of Felicity; *the Day-spring from on high hath visited Us, to give the Knowledge of Salvation, and to guide our Feet into the Way of Peace.*

very exact, though perfectly artless. Nothing hinders me from transcribing the Passage, but a Fear of being too *diffusive* in my Notes. Lest the Reader, who expects a *Treat*, should complain of a *Glut*: or have Reason to object, that the Side-board is more copiously furnished than the Table. Ωστε μη το παρεργον τȣ εργȣ γενεσθαι μειζον.

* Deut. xxviii. 65.

Peace.—While Millions of *rebellious Angels*, caſt from their native Thrones, are reſerved in Chains of Darkneſs, unto the Judgment of the great Day; We, though rebellious and apoſtate Sinners of Mankind, are delivered from the Wrath to come. The holy *JESUS* (bleſſed be his redeeming Goodneſs!) has endured the Croſs, and deſpiſed the Shame, on purpoſe to reſcue Us from thoſe doleful and ignominious Dungeons; where the Priſoners of Almighty Vengeance

> ——*Converſe with Groans,*
> *Unreſpited, unpitied, unreprievʼd,*
> *Ages of hopeleſs End* *.

Yes, my dear *Theron*; let me repeat your own important Words; "What are all the Benefits of "external Peace, though diſplayed in the faireſt "Light, and inlivened by the ſtrongeſt Con-"traſts—What are they all, compared with the "*Bleſſings* of the *Goſpel?*"—This brings the Olive-branch from Heaven, and proclaims Reconciliation with our offended GOD. This compoſes the Tumults of the Mind, and the Troubles of Conſcience. This diſarms the warring Paſſions, regulates the extravagant Deſires. In a Word; this ſpreads ſuch a Beauty of Holineſs, through the whole perſonal and ſocial Conduct, as is far more amiable, than the moſt engaging Forms of material Nature.

O! that Thou wouldeſt bow the Heavens! That Thou wouldeſt come down, *celeſtial VISITANT*; and make thy ſtated, thy favourite Abode in our Iſle! That every Individual may be ani-

* MILTON.

mated with thy Power; and every Community wear thy reſplendent Badge!—Then ſhall it be the *leaſt* Ingredient of our public Felicity, That the Sword of Slaughter is beaten into a Plough-ſhare, and the once bloody Spear bent into a Pruning-hook. It ſhall be the *loweſt* upon the Lift of our common Bleſſings, That *Violence is no more heard in our Land, Waſting and Deſtruction within our Borders. Our* very *Officers will be Peace, and our Exactors* * *Righteouſneſs. We ſhall call* (and the Event will correſpond with the Name) *our Walls Salvation, and our Gates Praiſe.* Then ſhall every Harp be taken down from the Willows, and every Voice burſt into a Song.—"In other Climes"—will be the general Acclamation—

"In other Climes, let Myriads of curious *Inſects*, "ſpin that delicate Thread, which ſoftens into "Velvet, ſtiffens into Brocade, or flows in gloſſy "Sattin; which reflects a lovelier Glow on the "Cheek of Beauty, and renders Royalty itſelf "more

* Iſai. lx. 17. *Officers* and *Exactors* ſignify Perſons veſted with public Authority: who have it in their Power, to rule with Rigour. But theſe, inſtead of abuſing their Power, ſhall conduct the Adminiſtration with all poſſible Equity and Gentleneſs; with a *parental* Tenderneſs, rather than a *magiſterial* Auſterity. Though the Title and Office of an Exactor may remain; nothing of the domineering Inſolence, or oppreſſive Severity, ſhall continue.—The Prophet, who always delivers his Sentiments with the utmoſt Emphaſis, ſays; They ſhall be, not barely *peaceable* and *righteous*, but poſſeſſed of theſe Qualities in the higheſt Degree. Or, which implies more, than any other Words can expreſs, They ſhall be *Peace* and *Righteouſneſs* itſelf.—The ſame beautiful Figure is uſed in the next Clauſe; which deſcribes the inviolable *Security* of the City, together with the univerſal *Joy* and *Piety* of the Inhabitants.

"more majeſtic. We are preſented with infi-
"nitely *finer Robes*, in the imputed Righteouſneſs
"of our REDEEMER, and the inherent
"Sanctification of his SPIRIT. Which beau-
"tify the very Soul, and prepare it for the Illuſ-
"trious Aſſembly—of Saints in Light—of Angels
"in Glory.

"Let eaſtern Rocks ſparkle with Diamonds,
"and give Birth to Gems of every dazzling Tinc-
"ture. We have, hid in the Field of our Scrip-
"tures, the *Pearl* of great *Price*; the *white* and
"precious *Stone* * of perfect Abſolution; a Diadem,
"which will ſhine with undiminiſhed Luſtre, when
"all the brilliant Wonders of the Mine are faded,
"extinguiſhed, loſt.

"Let richer Soils nouriſh the nobleſt Plants,
"and warmer Suns concoct their exquiſite Juices;
"the Lemon, pleaſingly poignant; the Citron,
"more mildly delicious; or that Pride of vegetable
"Life, and Compendium of all the Blandiſhments
"of Taſte, the Pine-apple. We enjoy far more
"exalted Dainties, in having Acceſs to the *Tree of*
"*Life*; *whoſe Leaves are for the Healing of the Na-*
"*tions* †; whoſe Boughs are repleniſhed with a
"never-failing Abundance of heavenly Fruits;
"and the Nutriment they diſpenſe, is Bliſs and
"Immortality.

"Let *Iberian* Vines ſwell the tranſlucent Cluſter,
"and burſt into a Flood of generous Wine. Let
"the *Tuſcan* Olive extract the Fatneſs of the Earth,
"and melt into a ſoft mellifluous Stream. We
"ſhall neither envy, nor covet theſe inferior Gifts,

* Rev. ii. 17. † Rev. xxii. 2.

" ſo long as We may draw Water out of the Wells " of Salvation. So long as We may receive the " *Unction from the* HOLY ONE *, thoſe In- " fluences of the COMFORTER, which not " only make a chearful Countenance, but gladden " the very Heart. Imparting ſuch a *refined* Satiſ- " faction, as the whole World cannot give; ſuch " a *permanent* Satisfaction, as no Calamities can " take away.

" Let *Ethiopian* Mountains be ribbed with Mar- " ble, and *Peruvian* Mines emboweled with Gold. " We want neither the impenetrable Quarry, nor " the glittering Ore; having, in our adored MES- " SIAH, a ſure *Foundation* for all our eternal " Hopes, and an inexhauſtible *Fund* of the divineſt " Riches.

" Be it ſo; that our *Iſis* is but a creeping Drop; " and the *Thames* itſelf, no more than a ſcanty " Rill; compared with the magnificent Sweep of " the *Ganges*, or the ſtupendous Amplitude of *Rio* " *de la Plata* †. The wretched Natives, even on " the

* 1 John ii. 20.

† This River receives its Supplies, from the long Rains of the torrid Zone; and from the proportionably large Reſervoirs, hid in the Bowels of the *Cordillieras*, the higheſt Mountains on Earth. In its Progreſs, it divides itſelf into two mighty Branches, the *Parana* and the *Paraguay*. Which, having run in ſeparate Channels, ſeveral thouſand Miles through the Country, unite at laſt; and form, by their Conflux, the magnificent and ſpacious *La Plata*. Whoſe Stream is near two hundred Miles broad; and continues thus *amazingly vaſt*, through a Courſe of ſix hundred. It pours ſuch an immenſe Quantity of the liquid Element into the *Atlantic* Ocean, that freſh Water may be taken up, for the Space of many a League. It is ſuppoſed to be the very largeſt River

" the Banks of thoſe ſtately Rivers, are at a Diſ-
" tance from all the Springs of true Conſolation.
" Whereas, We have a Fountain, We have a
" River, that iſſues from the Ocean of eternal
" Love. With incomparable Dignity, and with
" equal Propriety, it is ſtyled *The River of Life* *.
" It viſits the Houſe of the Mourner, and revives
" the Spirit of the Sorrowful. It makes glad the
" City, and makes happy the Servants of our
" GOD. It quickens even the Dead; and every
" human Creature, that drinks of its Water, lives
" for ever.

" Let *Aſiatic* Iſlands boaſt their Mountains of
" Myrrh, and Hills of Frankincenſe. Let *Ara-*
" *bian* Groves, with ſuperior Liberality, diſtil
" their healing Gums; and ripen, for vigorous
" Operation, their vital Drugs. We have a *more*
" *ſovereign* Remedy, than their moſt powerful Re-
" ſtoratives, in the great MEDIATOR's aton-
" ing Blood. We have a *more refreſhing* Banquet,
" than all their mingled Sweets, in commemorat-
" ing his Paſſion, and participating his Merits.

River in the World. Rather like a Sea, than a River, it deſerves, incomparably more than *Timavus*, *Virgil*'s grand Deſcription;

——————*Caſto cum Murmure Montis*
It Mare proruptum, & Pelago premit Arva ſonanti.

To conceive a proper Idea of its prodigious Dimenſions, We may imagine a Current of Waters, taking its riſe beyond *Jeruſalem*; and, after having received all the Rivers of *Europe* into its capacious Bed, making its Entry on the *Britiſh* Ocean, by a Mouth extended from *Dover* to *Briſtol*.

* Rev. xxii. 1.

" In ſhort; We have an Equivalent, far more " than an Equivalent, for all thoſe choice Productions, which bloom in the Gardens, or baſk in " the Orchards of the Sun. We have a Goſpel, " rich in precious Privileges, and abounding with " ineſtimable Promiſes: We have a SAVIOUR, " full of *forgiving Goodneſs*, and liberal of *renewing* " *Grace*. At whoſe auſpicious Approach, Fountains ſpout amidſt the burning Deſart; under " whoſe welcome Footſteps, the ſandy Waſte " ſmiles with Herbage; and beneath his potent " Touch, *The Wilderneſs buds and bloſſoms as a* " *Roſe* *. Or, to ſpeak plainly, the deſolate and " barren Soul brings forth thoſe Fruits of the " SPIRT, which are infinitely more ornamental, than the ſilken Gems of Spring; *infinitely* " more beneficial, than the ſalubrious Stores of " Autumn.

" We have a SAVIOUR—Tell it out among " the Heathen; that all the Nations on Earth, *may* " partake of the Gift, and join in the Song—A " SAVIOUR We have, whoſe radiant Eye " brightens the gloomy Paths of Affliction. Whoſe " efficacious Bleſſing makes *all Things work together* " *for the Good* † of his People. Death, gilded by " his propitious Smile, even Death *itſelf* looks " gay. Nor is the Grave, under his benign Adminiſtration, any longer a Den of *Deſtruction*; " but a ſhort and ſhady Avenue to thoſe immortal " Manſions; whoſe *Foundations are laid with Sap-* " *phires*; *whoſe Windows are of Agate*; *the Gates of* " *Carbuncle*; *and all the Borders of pleaſant Stones* ‡." Pardon

* Iſai. xxxv. 1. † Rom. viii. 28. ‡ Iſai. liv. 11, 12.

Pardon my Rhapſody, dear *Theron*. Your own Remark, added to the grand and lovely Views, have warmed, have animated, have almoſt tranſported me.—*Theron* anſwered not a Word: but ſat fixed in Thought.—While He is indulging his Contemplation, We may juſt obſerve ſome other Peculiarities of the Proſpect.

Here and there, a loneſome *Cottage* ſcarcely lifts its humble Head. No pompous Swell of projecting Steps, ſurrounds the Door: no appendent Wings of inferior Offices, ſkirt the Edifice: no ſtately Hall, ſlabbed with Marble, and roofed with Sculpture, receives the gazing Stranger. But white-robed Innocence, and ſweet-featured Contentment, Neatneſs * with a Gloſs on her Garments, and Health, with a Bloom in her Cheeks, adorn the Habitation. While Virtue lends her Graces, and Religion com-

 municates

* *Neatneſs*—To exemplify and recommend this Ornament of ſocial Life, is, perhaps, the Deſign of a Paſſage, which I have never ſeen ſatisfactorily explained. When our LORD gave a Treat to five thouſand Men, who attended his Preaching; when He commanded them to ſit down upon the Ground, in order to receive his Bounty in the moſt commodious Manner; it is added by the ſacred Hiſtorian, *There was much Graſs in the Place**. Why is this Circumſtance particularly remarked? To denote the *Decorum* of the Tranſaction; and to be, as I imagine, both an Example and a Recommendation of *Neatneſs*. The Seats, though very plain and ſimple, were far from being ſordid or ſlovenly. It was not a dirty Place, or a duſty Spot, but covered with the Carpets of Nature. Which rendered it as cleanly, if not ſo ſumptuous, as the Sofas of *Turky*; or "the Beds "of Gold and Silver," uſed at the Feaſt of King *Ahaſuerus* †.

* *John* vi. 10. † *Eſther* i. 6.

municates her Honours, to dignify the Abode; rendering the blameleſs Hutt ſuperior, in *real* Majeſty, to a diſſolute Court.

At ſome Diſtance, appear the hoary Remains of an antient *Monaſtery*. Sunk beneath the Weight of revolving Years, the once venerable Fabric is leveled with the Duſt. The lofty and ornamental Temple, lies rudely over-grown with Moſs, or ſtill more ignobly covered with Weeds. The Walls, where ſainted Imagery ſtood, or *idoliz'd* Painting ſhone, are claſped with twining Ivy, or ſhagged with horrid Thorn.—Through Iſles, that once echoed to the Chantor's Voice, mingled with the Organ's majeſtic Sound, the hollow Winds roar, and the daſhing Storm drives. Where are, now, the ſilent Cells, the vocal Choirs, the duſky Groves? In which the *romantic* Saints prolonged their lonely Vigils, by the midnight Taper; or poured their united Prayers, before the Lark had waked the Morn; or ſtrolled, in ever-muſing Melancholy, along the Moon-light Glade.—Surely, thoſe mouldering Fragments now teach, (and with a much better Grace, with a much ſtronger Emphaſis) what formerly their unſocial and gloomy Reſidentiaries profeſſed. They teach the *Vanity* of the World, and the *tranſitory* Duration of all that is reckoned ſtable, in this Region of Shadows.

Behold, on yonder Eminence, the rueful Memorials of a magnificent *Caſtle*. All diſmantled, and quite demoliſhed, it gives a Shading of Solemnity to the more lively Parts of Nature's Picture; and attempers the rural Delight, with ſome Touches of alarming Dread.—*War*, deſtructive *War*, has ſnatched the Scythe from the Hand of Time, and hurried

hurried on the Steps of Deſtiny. Thoſe broken Columns, and ſhattered Walls; thoſe proſtrate Towers, and Battlements daſhed to the Ground; carry evident Marks of an immature Downfal. They were built for Ages, and for Ages might have ſtood, a Defence and Accommodation to Generations yet unborn; if haply they had eſcaped the dire Aſſaults of hoſtile Rage.—But, what Vigilance of Man, can prevent the Miner's dark Approach? Or what Solidity of Bulwark, can withſtand the bellowing Engine's impetuous Shock?

Thoſe, perhaps, were the Rooms, in which *licentious* Mirth crowned with Roſes the ſparkling Bowl, and tuned to the ſilver-ſounding Lute the Syren's inchanting Song. Thoſe, the Scenes of voluptuous Indulgence, where Luxury poured her Delicacies: where Beauty, inſidious Beauty, practiſed her Wiles; and ſpread, with bewitching Art, her wanton Snares.—Now inſtead of the riotous Banquet, and Intrigues of lawleſs Love, the Owl utters her hated Screams by Night, and the Raven flaps her ominous Wing by Day.—Where are the Violet-couches, and the Woodbine-bowers; which fanned, with their breathing Sweets, the polluted Flame? The Soil ſeems to ſuffer for the Abuſes of the Owner. Blaſted and diſhonoured, it produces nothing but ragged Briars, and noiſome Nettles; under whoſe odious Covert, the hiſſing Snake glides, or the croaking Toad crawls.—Fearful Intimation of that *ignominious* and *doleful* Cataſtrophe, which awaits the Sons of Riot! When their momentary Gratifications will drop, like the faded Leaf; and leave nothing behind, but Pangs of Remorſe,

morſe, keener far than the pointed Thorn, and more envenomed than the Viper's Tooth.

Perhaps, they were the beauteous and honoured Abodes, where *Grandeur* and *Politeneſs* walked their daily Round, attended with a Train of guiltleſs Delights. Where amiable and refined *Friendſhip* was wont to ſit and ſmile; looking Love, and talking the very Soul. Where Hoſpitality, with Oeconomy always at her Side, ſtood beckoning to the *diſtreſſed*, but *induſtrious* * Poor; and ſhowered

* I ſay diſtreſſed, but *induſtrious* Poor—Becauſe, I would not be underſtood, as encouraging, in any Degree, the Relief of our *common Beggars*.—Towards the former, I would cultivate a tender and ever-yearning Compaſſion; I would anticipate their Complaints; and, as a ſacred Writer directs, would even SEEK *to do them Good*—But as to the latter, I frankly own, that I look upon it as my Duty, to diſcourage ſuch Cumberers of the Ground. They are, generally ſpeaking, luſty Drones; and their habitual *Begging*, is no better than a ſpecious *Robbing* of the public Hive. For ſuch *ſturdy* Supplicants, who are able to undergo the Fatigue of Traveling; able to endure the Inclemencies of the Weather; and conſequently much more able, were they equally willing, to exerciſe themſelves in ſome Species of laudable Induſtry—For theſe, the *Houſe of Correction* would be a far more ſalutary Proviſion, than any Supply from our Table; and *Confinement* to *Labour*, a much more beneficial Charity, than the Liberality of the Purſe.

We ſhould remember, and *they* ſhould be taught, that the Law ordained by the Court of Heaven, is, *If a Man will not work, neither ſhall He eat*. If then We contribute to ſupport them in Idleneſs, do We not *counteract* and fruſtrate this wiſe Regulation, eſtabliſhed by the great SOVEREIGN of the Univerſe?—Is it not alſo a *Wrong* to the deſerving Poor, if We ſuffer theſe Wens on the Body politic to draw off the Nourihment, which

ed Bleſſings from her liberal Hand.—But War, deteſted War, has ſtretched over the ſocial and inviting

which ought to circulate amongſt the valuable and uſeful Members?—Money or Victuals beſtowed on theſe worthleſs Wretches, is not real Beneficence, but the *Earneſt-penny* of Sloth. It hires them, to be good for nothing; and pays them, for being public Nuiſances.

Let Us then unanimouſly join, to ſhake off theſe *dead Weights* from our Wheels, and diſlodge theſe *Swarms* of *Vermin* from our State. Let Us be deaf to their moſt importunate Clamours; and aſſure Ourſelves, that, by this determined Inflexibility, We do *GOD*, We do our *Community*, We do *them*, the moſt ſubſtantial Service.—Should they implore by the *injured* Name of *JESUS*; for the Honour of the *LORD JESUS*, let Us reſolutely with-hold our Alms. Their Meaning is,—"I cannot go on, in my preſent ſhameful and iniquitous Courſe; I can no longer continue to act "the *wicked and ſlothful Servant*; unleſs You will ad"miniſter ſome kindly—pernicious Aſſiſtance. For "*CHRIST*'s ſake, therefore, aſſiſt me to diſhonour "my Chriſtian Name, and to live more baſe than the "Beaſts that periſh. For *CHRIST*'s ſake, help me "to be the Reproach and the Burthen of my native "Country; and to perſiſt in the Way, which leads to "eternal Deſtruction."—This is the *true Import* of their Petitions. And, whether the Sanction of that moſt venerable Name, added to *ſuch* a Requeſt, ſhould move our Commiſeration, or excite our Abhorrence, let every thinking Perſon judge.

I truſt, the Reader will be ſo candid, as to excuſe this long digreſſive Note; and do me the Juſtice to believe, That I am not pleading againſt, but for the *real* Poor: not to *harden* any One's Heart, but rather to *direct* every One's Hand.—Give, out of Gratitude to *CHRIST*, out of Compaſſion to the Needy, and be for ever bleſſed. But give not to incorrigible Vagrants; to maintain Impiety, and pamper Indolence; leſt it be demanded, one Day, *Who hath required this at your Hand?* Leſt, by ſupporting diſſolute Creatures in that abandoned

viting Seat, *the Line of Confuſion, and the Stones of Emptineſs* *. Now, alas! nothing but Deſolation and Horror haunt the ſavage Retreat. The ample Arches of the Bridge, which ſo often tranſmitted the wondering Paſſenger along their pendile Way, lie buried in the dreary Moat.—Thoſe Relics of the maſſy Portals, naked and abandoned, ſeem to bemoan their melancholy Condition. No ſplendid Chariots, with their gay Retinue, frequent ſolitary Avenues. No needy Steps, with chearful Expectations, beſiege the once bountiful Gate. But all is a miſerable, forlorn, hideous Pile of Rubbiſh.

Since Riches ſo often take to themſelves Wings, and fly away: ſince Houſes, great and fair, reel upon their Foundations, and ſo ſoon tumble into Duſt: how wiſe, how ſalutary, is our divine MASTER's Advice! *Make to yourſelves Friends with the Mammon of Unrighteouſneſs; that, when* the World fails around *You*, when the Springs of Nature *fail* within you; *they*, as Witneſſes of your Charity, and Vouchers for the Sincerity of your Faith, *may receive You into everlaſting Habitations* †. —This is to lay up Treaſure *for Ourſelves* ‡: Whereas, whatever elſe We amaſs, is for our Heirs, for our Succeſſors, for We know not Who. This Wealth is truly emphatically called *our own* ‖: it is an Advowſon; We have the Perpetuity. Whereas, whatever elſe We poſſeſs, is ours only for a *Turn* or in *Truſt*.

See

ed Sloth, which is the Nurſe of all Vice, We become Partakers of their Guilt, and acceſſary to their Ruin.

* Iſai. xxxiv. 11. † Luke xvi. 9. ‡ Matt. vi. 20. ‖ Luke xvi. 12.

See the dreadful, dreadful Ravages of *civil Diſcord!* Where-ever that infernal Fury ſtalks, She marks her Steps in Blood, and leaves opulent Cities a ruinous Heap *.—What Thanks then, what ar-

dent

* The Effects of what *Virgil* calls *Bella, horrida Bella*, were never diſplayed in Colours that *glow*, and with Figures that *alarm*, like thoſe which are uſed by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chap. iv. 19, &c. As this is, perhaps, the greateſt Maſter-piece of the Kind, the Reader will permit me to enrich the Notes, with a Tranſcript of the Paſſage.

Firſt We *ſee*, or rather We *feel*, the Effects of War on the *human Mind*; the keeneſt Anguiſh, the deepeſt Diſmay, and the wildeſt Amazement. All expreſſed in a Language, exactly ſuiting the Subject—vehement——abrupt—diſorderly. *My Bowels! My Bowels! I am pained at my very Heart. My very Heart maketh a Noiſe in me; I cannot hold my Peace: becauſe Thou haſt heard, O my Soul, the Sound of the Trumpet, the Alarm of War.—Deſtruction upon Deſtruction is cried; for the Land is ſpoiled. Suddenly are my Tents ſpoiled, and my Curtains in a Moment.—How long ſhall I ſee the Standard, and hear the Sound of the Trumpet?*

Then We ſee the diſmal Devaſtations of War; and who does not ſhudder at the Sight? The whole Country laid in Ruins! Deprived of all its Ornaments, and all its Inhabitants! nothing but Confuſion and Emptineſs. Reduced to a *Solitude*, and a *Chaos*. *I beheld the Earth, and lo! and lo it was without Form and void: and the Heavens, and they had no Light.—I beheld the Mountains, and lo! they trembled, and all the Hills moved lightly.—I beheld, and lo! there was no Man, and all the Birds of the Heavens were fled.—I beheld, and lo! the fruitful Place was a Wilderneſs, and all the Cities thereof were broken down, at the Preſence of the LORD, and by his fierce Anger.*

If, after all this Profuſion of Imagery, *bold* and *animated* even to Aſtoniſhment, We can have any Reliſh for the cold Correctneſs of a *heathen* Genius, We may

find

dent and ceaſeleſs Thanks, are due to that all-ſuperintending, ever gracious LORD, who has daſhed the Torch from her Hand; has broke her murderous Weapons; and driven the baleful Peſt from our *Iſland!*—May the ſame almighty Goodneſs baniſh the Monſter from all Lands! Baniſh the accurſed Monſter, with her hated Aſſociate Rapine, and her inſatiable Purveyor Ambition, to the deepeſt, deepeſt Hell. Branded with everlaſting Infamy, and bound in adamantine Chains, *there* let them gnaſh their Teeth, and bite the inevitable Curb!—While *Peace*, deſcending from her native Heaven, bids her Olives ſpring amidſt the joyful Nations: and *Plenty*, in League with Commerce, ſcatters Bleſſings from Clime to Clime. While *Gladneſs* ſmiles in every Eye; and *Love*, extenſive diſintereſted Love, leveling the Partition-wall of Bigotry, cements every Heart in the beſt of Bonds.

Near thoſe Heaps of Havock, lies the Spot, ever-memorable and ſtill revered, on which an obſtinate and fatal Battle was fought.—The Huſbandman, as He breaks his fallow Land, or rends the graſſy Turf, often diſcovers the horrid Implements, and the more horrid Effects, of that bloody Conflict. He ſtarts, to hear his Coulter ſtrike upon the Boſſes of a ruſty Buckler, or gride over the Edge

find ſomething of the ſame Nature, in *Horace* Lib. II. Od. 1.

Jam nunc minaci, &c.

Which, though one of his moſt ſpirited and ſublime Paſſages, is, if compared with the Fire, the Grandeur, the majeſtic Wildneſs and Horror of the Prophet, like a Land-Flood compared with the univerſal Deluge.

Edge of a blunted Sword. He turns pale, to ſee human Bones thrown up before his Plough; and ſtands aghaſt to think, that, in cutting his *Furrow*, He opens a *Grave*.—The grey-headed Sire often relates to his Grandſons, hanging with eager Attention on the Tale, and trembling for the Event; relates the diſmal, the glorious Deeds of that important Day.—How the Fields, now covered with waving Crops, were then loaded with mangled and ghaſtly Corpſes. How the Paſtures, now green with Herbage, were then incrimſoned with human Gore.

"On *that* extended Common, He ſays, where "the buſy Shepherd is erecting his hurdled Citadel, "the Tents were ſpread, and the Banners diſplay-"ed; the Spears briſtled in Air, and the burniſhed "Helmets glittered to the Sun.—On *yonder* riſing "Ground, where the friſking Lambs play their "harmleſs Frolics, ſtood the martial Files; clad "in Mail, and ranged in Battle-array. There "ſtood War, with all its collected Horrors; ho-"vering, like ſome portentous Cloud, and ready "to burſt into an immediate Storm.—On the "*nearer* Plain, where the quiet Steed grazes in "Safety, and thoſe ſober Oxen chew the juicy "Herb, the fierce Encounter mixed. There, the "Javelins, launched from nervous Arms, and "aimed by vengeful Eyes, flew and reflew, whiz-"zing with Death. The Arrows lightened * "from

* *Habak.* iii. 11. ברק חניתך literally tranſlated, preſents Us with that beautiful bold Figure, *The Lightening of thy Spear*.—Which, with innumerable other Graces of Speech, that give Dignity and Spirit to our modern Com-

" from the Strings; and drenched their keen
" Points, and dipped their feathery Wings in
" Blood.—Soon as this Shower of missive Steel
" ceased, instantly outsprung Thousands of flam-
" ing Swords. They clash on the brazen Shields;
" they cut their Way through the reeking Armour;
" and sheath their Blades in many a gallant daunt-
" less Heart.—Here, on this distinguished Level,
" the proud insulting Foe, presuming on Victory,
" and boasting of their Numbers, poured in like a
" Flood. There, a bold determined Battalion, of
" which myself was a Part, planted themselves like
" a Rock, and broke the fierce Attack.

" Then adds the brave old Warrior, then the
" coward Herd fled before the Vengeance of our
" conquering Arms. Then, these Hands strewed
" the Plains with a Harvest, different far from their
" present Productions. Then, *the Fathers*, smit-
" ten with inexpressible Dread, *looked not back on*
" *their Children* *; though shuddering at the lifted
" Spear,

Compositions, are borrowed from the Language of *Sion*; are transplanted from the School of the Prophets.—If We start into a pleasing Amazement, at *Homer's* δῆρι μαινόλαι; have We not equal Reason to be charmed and surprised at *Nahum's* יתהוללו הרכב? Every Chariot *raged* with Violence and Impetuosity; was eager, was even *mad* to destroy. *Nah.* ii. 5. *Milton* has evidently lighted his Torch at the Prophet's Flame.

——————*The* madding *Wheels*
Of brazen Chariots raged. B. VI.

* For this very striking, and most terrific Image, We are obliged to the Prophet *Jeremiah*. Who, in a few Words, but with all the Pomp of Horror, describes the Din of approaching War, and the Consternation of a vanquished

"Spear, or ſcreaming under the brandiſhed Sword. "*The Fathers looked not back on their Children*, though "they fell among the Slain, gaſhed with deadly "Wounds; or lay expiring, in Groans of Agony, "under our Feet."

We leave the Warrior, to repeat his ſhocking Story, and enjoy his ſavage Satisfaction. He ſpeaks, 'tis true, in a Strain ſomewhat ſuperior to his Character. As though the Triumph of his

vanquiſhed People. *At the Noiſe of the Stamping of the Hoofs of his ſtrong Horſes, at the Ruſhing of his Chariots, and at the Rumbling of his Wheels, the Fathers ſhall not look back unto their Children, for Feebleneſs of Hands.* Jerem. xlvii. 3.

Not to mention the Thunder-like Sound of the Diction; and that in a Language much leſs ſonorous than the Original; I appeal to every Reader, Whether the *laſt* Circumſtance does not awaken the Idea of ſo tremendous a Scene, and ſo horrible a Dread, as no Words can expreſs. *Virgil* has imitated the Prophet's Manner, in that very delicate deſcriptive Touch; where, repreſenting the prodigious Alarm, excited by the Yell of the infernal Fury, He ſays;

Et trepidæ Matres preſſere ad Pectora Natos.

That is, *Each frighted Mother claſped the Infant to her fluttering Boſom.*

No One, I believe, need be informed, that the Panic is painted, with a very ſuperior Energy, by the Poet of Heaven. In the *Pagan*'s Draught, the Effect of Fear *reſults* from the Conſtitution, and coincides with the Bias of Humanity. Whereas, in the *Prophet*'s Picture, it *counter-acts*, it *ſuſpends*, it entirely *over-bears*, the tendereſt Workings and ſtrongeſt Propenſities of Nature; though inſtigated, on one hand, by the moſt importunate Calls of exquiſite Diſtreſs; and ſtimulated, on the other, by all the Solicitations of the moſt yearning Compaſſion.

Heart, had exalted his Sentiments, and ennobled his Language. Nevertheleſs, for calmer Scenes, and ſofter Delights, We willingly leave him.

The Eye is pleaſed with the elegant Gaiety of the Parterre; the Ear is ſoothed with the warbling Melody of the Grove; but *grand* Objects, and the *Magnificence* of Things, charm and tranſport the whole Man. The Mind, on ſuch Occaſions, ſeems to *expand* with the Proſpect, and ſecretly exults in the Conſciouſneſs of her Greatneſs.—Intent upon theſe large and excurſive Views, our Friends ſcarce advert to the minuter Beauties, which addreſs them on every Side. The *Swan*, with her ſnowy Plumes, and loftily bending Head; amidſt all her ſuperb Air, and lordly State; rows unnoticed by.—Equally unnoticed is both the Array and the Action of the *Duck*; her gloſſy Neck, and finely chequered Wings; her diving into the Deep, or her darting up into Day.—The *Swallow*, ſkimming the Air in wanton Circles, or dipping her downy Breaſt in the Flood, courts their Obſervation in vain.—Nor could the *finny Shoals* attract their Regard, though they played before the Boat in ſportive Chace; or, glancing quick to the Surface, ſhewed their pearly Coats, bedropped with Gold.—Thus they, engaged in ſublime Speculations, neglect inferior Entertainments. And if the Sons of Religion over-look the *diminutive*, *tranſient*, *deluſory* Forms of Pleaſure, which float on the narrow Stream of Time, or flit along the ſcanty Bounds of Senſe; it is only to contemplate and enjoy a Happineſs in their GOD, which is *elevated*, *ſubſtantial*, and *immortal*. Compared with which, whatever the Eye can ſurvey, from Pole to

Pole,

Pole, from the riſing to the ſetting Sun, is a Cockle-ſhell, a Butterfly, a Bubble.

From this open and enlarged Scene, they enter the Skirts of a vaſt, umbrageous, venerable *Foreſt*.—On either Side, the ſturdy and gigantic Sons of Earth, rear their aged Trunks, and ſpread their branching Arms. Trees, of every hardy Make, and every majeſtic Form, in agreeable Diſorder, and with a wild kind of Grandeur, fill the aerial Regions. The huge, expanſive, roaming Boughs unite themſelves over the Current, and diffuſe "their Umbrage, broad and brown as Evening."

What ſolemn Twilight! What ſtupendous Shades
Enwrap theſe loneſome Floods? Thro' every Nerve
A ſacred Honour thrills, a pleaſing Fear
Glides o'er the Mind.

The timorous *Deer* ſtart at the Claſhing of the Waves. Alarmed with the unuſual Sound, they look up, and gaze for a Moment: then fly into Covert, by various Ways, and with precipitate Speed; vaniſhing, rather than departing from the Glade.

How *awful* to reflect, as they ſteal along the ſhelving Shores, and the moſs-grown Banks; as they glide under the pendent Shades of quivering Poplar, of whiſtling Fir, and the ſolemn-ſounding Foliage of the Oak—how awful to reflect; "Theſe "were the lonely Haunts of the *Druids*, two thou-"ſand Years ago! Amidſt theſe duſky Mazes, and "ſympathetic Glooms, the penſive Sages ſtrayed. "Here, they ſought, they found, and with all the "Solemnity of ſuperſtitious Devotion, they ga-

" thered their *Miſletoe* *. Here, the viſionary Re-
" cluſes ſhunned the tumultuous Ways of Men,
" and traced the myſterious Paths of Providence.
" Here they explored the Secrets of Nature, and
" invoked their fabled Gods."

Sometimes wrapt in a ſudden Reverie of Thought, ſometimes engaged in Converſation on the ſolemn Appearance of Things, the Voyagers ſcarce perceive their Progreſs. Before they are aware, this venerable Scene is loſt; and they find themſelves advanced upon the Borders of a *beautiful Lawn*. The Foreſt, retiring to the Right-hand, in the Shape of a Creſcent, compoſed what *Milton* ſtyles, " A verdurous Wall of ſtateſieſt Aſpect;" and left, in the Midſt, an ample Space for the Flouriſhing of Herbage.

Here, ſaid *Theron*, if You pleaſe, We will alight; and leave the Bearer of our *floating Sedan*, to purſue his ceaſeleſs Courſe—to enrich the Boſom of other Vallies, and lave the Feet of other Hills—to viſit Cities, and make the Tour of Counties—to reflect the

* If the Reader pleaſes, He may ſee theſe pompous Solemnities deſcribed, in VANIERII *Præd. Ruſt.* pag. 125, &c. Where, the curious Narrative of *Pliny*, is embelliſhed with the harmonious Numbers of *Virgil*.—With regard to the Reflections, occaſioned by this Account; the Compliments laviſhed on the *French*, their *Religion*, and their *Monarch*; I believe, the judicious *Proteſtant* will confeſs with me; that, as our charming Author has copied the Language, and entered into the Spirit of the Antients, He has alſo catched a Tincture of their Superſtition. Imbibing, together with *all* their Elegancies and Graces, *ſome* of their fanſiful and legendary Levities.

Verùm ubi plura nitent in Carmine, non Ego paucis
Offendar Maculis. HOR.

the Image of many a ſplendid Structure, which adorn his Banks; and, what is far more amiable, to diſtribute, all along his winding Journey, innumerable Conveniencies for Man and Beaſt: acquiring, the farther He goes, and the more Benefits He confers, a greater Depth, and a wider Swell; to the remarkable Confirmation of that beneficent Maxim, *There is that ſcattereth, yet increaſeth* *;

— — — — — — *And Good, the more*
Communicated, more abundant proves.

MILTON.

Theron and *Aſpaſio*, walking acroſs the ſpacious Amphitheatre, ſeated themſelves at the Extremity of the Bend. Before them, lay a verdant Area, quite even; perfectly handſome; but far from gay. *Green* was all the Dreſs, without any Mixture of gaudy Flowers, or glittering Colours. Only, now-and-then, a gentle Breeze, ſkimming over the undulating Mead, impreſſed a varying wavy Gloſs on its Surface. The whole ſeemed to reſemble the decent and ſober Ornaments of *maturer Age*, when it has put off the Trappings, and bid adieu to the Levities of Youth.—The broad, tranſparent Stream, ran parallel with the Lips † of the Channel; and drew, as it were, a Line of Circumvallation, to guard the calm Retreat. The Water appeared, where ſhaded with Boughs, like a Barrier of poliſhed Steel; where open to the Sun, like a Mirror

* Prov. xi. 24.

† The *Greek*, which is above all Languages happy, in its beautiful Variety of *compound* Words, very neatly expreſſes this Appearance by—ισοχειλης τη γη.

of flowing Cryſtal.—The eaſtern Edges of the River, were barricaded with a kind of mountainou Declivity. On whoſe rude and rocky Sides, a fe ſtunted Shrubs and ill-formed Trees hung. Amon which the timorous Rabbit burrowed, and th bearded Goat browzed.—Not far from the Summit two or three Fountains guſhed: which, uniting their Currents, as they trickled down the Steep, formed a natural *Caſcade*. Here, it was loſt in the ruſhy Dells, or obſcured by the twiſting Roots; there, it burſt again into View, and playing full in the Eye of Day, looked like a Sheet of ſpouting Silver.

In this romantic Retirement, ſaid *Theron*, We are quite ſequeſtered from Society. We ſeem to be in a World of our own; and ſhould almoſt be tempted to forget, that We are encompaſſed with a kindred Species; did not the *Muſic* of thoſe ſilver-tongued *Bells*, poured from a diſtant Steeple, and gliding along the gentle Stream, bring Us News of human Kind.

Eſcaped from Man, and his buſy Walks, methinks, We are come to the Houſe of Tranquility. Such a deep, undiſturbed Compoſure reigns all around!—It is as if ſome auguſt Perſonage was making his Entrance, or ſome majeſtic Being was upon the Point to ſpeak, and all Nature ſtood fixed in attentive Expectation. No Place better fitted to cheriſh, or to inſpire, a *contemplative Sedateneſs*.

Awful Solitude! How pleaſingly horrid is the Aſpect of Things!—*Before Us*, are ſhaggy Rocks, and frowning Precipices, with broken Falls of Water, glittering through the Cliffs. Unwrought,

hoary

hoary Grottoes, ancient as the Deluge! Yawning, gloomy Caverns, where Fancy ſhudders, as ſhe enters!—*Around Us*, are "the Trees of the LORD." Trees, which the Hand of the moſt HIGH hath planted, and which ſeem to be co-eval with the World. Who can forbear admiring their Simplicity and Grandeur; the noble Plainneſs of their Verdure, and the prodigious Statelineſs of their Growth; their ſtupendous Bulk, and venerable Shades.

What a *Speck* are our Gardens, and what a mere *Dwarf* are our Groves, compared with theſe unconfined, vaſt Plantations?—Here is none of your nice Exactneſs, but all is irregularly and wildly great. Here are no Traces of the Shears, nor any Footſteps of the Spade, but the Handy-work of the DEITY is apparent in all.—Give *me* the Scenes, which diſdain the puny Aſſiſtance of Art, and are infinitely ſuperior to the low Toils of Man. Give *me* the Scenes, which ſcorn to *bribe* our Attention, with a little borrowed Spruceneſs of Shape; but, by their own native Dignity, *command* our Regard. I love the Proſpects, which, the Moment they are beheld, ſtrike the Soul with Veneration, or tranſport it with Wonder, which cry aloud, in the Ear of Reaſon, *Aſcribe Ye Greatneſs unto our GOD* *.—Such, I think, in a very eminent Degree, is the Foreſt;

——— *High waving o'er the Hills,*
Or to the vaſt Horizon wide diffus'd,
A boundleſs deep Immenſity of Shade.

Aſp. Solomon's refined Genius ſeems to have been fond of the ſame Situation, and delighted with the

* Deut. xxxii. 3.

ſame Objects. Therefore, at a great Expence, and in the moſt curious Taſte, He built *The Houſe of the Foreſt.*—*Iſaiah*'s divine Imagination was charmed with the ſame grand Spectacle. More frequently, than any of the Prophets, He derives his Illuſtrations from it. One Compariſon I particularly remember. Speaking of the *Aſſyrian* King, and his military Forces, He likens them to ſuch an Aſſemblage of Trees: *numerous*, as their amazing Multitudes; *ſtrong*, as their maſſy Trunks. Yet, numerous and potent as they were, they ſhould all be brought low, and laid in the Duſt. *For behold the LORD, the LORD of Hoſts ſhall lop the Bough with Terror, and the High Ones of Stature ſhall be hewn down, and the Haughty ſhall be humbled; and he ſhall cut down the Thickets of his Foreſt with Iron, and Lebanon ſhall fall by a mighty One* *.

Then

* Iſai. x. 33, 34. In this Prediction, concerning the Deſtruction of *Sennacherib*'s Army, the Prophet is remarkably exact, and no leſs beautiful.—*The high Ones of Stature*; the Nobles and principal Officers. Who, amidſt all their grand Equipage and majeſtic Deportment, reſemble the moſt ſtately Trees.—*The haughty* Chiefs, proud of their paſt Victories; preſuming on future Conqueſts; and elated, in their own Imagination, like Cedars, towering to the Skies—Theſe *ſhall be hewn down* from their Elevation and Dignity. They *ſhall be humbled*; deeply abaſed; and reduced to Duſt and Worms.—*And HE ſhall cut down the Thickets*, the common Soldiers; not unlike the Shrubs and Underwood of a Foreſt. A promiſcuous Multitude of People, who have no other Diſtinction, than that of being arranged into Troops.—*And Lebanon*; this gives Us a View of the Leaders and Soldiers united; under Arms; and formed in Battle Array. In this View, they appear formidable, and may ſeem invincible. Yet *ſhall they fall by a mighty One.* The LORD, by a mighty Angel

Then He paſſes, by a moſt beautiful Tranſition, to his darling Topic, the Redemption of Sinners. He gives Us, together with one of the fineſt Contraſts * imaginable, a View of the MESSIAH and his great Salvation. When all thoſe lofty Cedars are leveled with the Ground, *there ſhall come a Rod*, a ſingle, ſlender Twig ſhall ſpring *from the Stem of Jeſſe* †. Which, notwithſtanding its mean Original, and unpromiſing Appearance, ſhall rear its Head to the Skies, and extend its Shade to the Ends of the Earth.

Ther. You do well, *Aſpaſio*, to recal my roving Thoughts. This magnificent Solitude had captivated my Imagination, and I was giving a Looſe to the uſual Sallies of my Fancy. But, with a willing Compliance, I turn to a more excellent Subject.—Only I muſt aſſure you, that your Remark awakens a painful Idea in *my* Mind, though a joyful one in your own. For, my Hopes, which were once high and lifted up, are now too much like that devoted proſtrate Foreſt.

Aſp. My dear *Theron*, give me leave to ſay, they were never rightly founded, never built on the Foun-

Angel excelling in Strength, ſhall fell them to the Ground; ſhall deſtroy them eaſily and utterly—eaſily, as the Woodman, with his ſharpened Ax, *lops* a ſingle *Bough*—utterly, as all the Twigs, when once the Trunk is ſevered from the Root, wither, decay, and die.

* This fine Contraſt, and that artful Tranſition are, by the injudicious Diviſion of the two Chapters, very much obſcured, if not quite loſt, to many Readers. The Chapters, I think, ſhould by no means be ſeparated; but, the tenth and the eleventh, as a Continuation of the ſame Prophecy, ſhould be *united*.

† Iſai. xi. 1.

Foundation of the Goſpel, which, inſtead of directing Us what to do, in order to obtain Acceptance with GOD, ſets before Us all that is requiſite for this great End, as *already* done and completed by *JESUS CHRIST*. Your Hopes were a mere Syſtem of Self-Dependence; and what you thought

——————— A Real Good,
Nought elſe but Vanity miſunderſtood.

They were, what *Shakeſpear* calls, *the baſeleſs Fabric of a Viſion*. Now the ſhadowy and tranſient are vaniſhed, that ſolid Hopes and everlaſting Joys may ſucceed. Let them reſt on *CHRIST*, the infinitely glorious REDEEMER, and they ſhall never be overthrown, never be demoliſhed any more.

Caſt a Look upon yonder Ivy. What can be more feeble? It has not Strength enough to withſtand the ſlighteſt Blaſt. Nay, if left to itſelf, its own Weight would cruſh it to the Earth. Yet, by twining around the Oak, how high it riſes, and how firm it ſtands! An Emblem of our State, and a Pattern for our Imitation.—So let Us, who in ourſelves are nothing, of ourſelves can do nothing, let us fly to *CHRIST*; rely on *CHRIST*; and, as *Barnabas* (that true Son of Conſolation) ſpeaks, *cleave to the LORD JESUS CHRIST with full Purpoſe of Heart* *. Let us determine to know nothing, to deſire nothing, to depend on nothing, but *JESUS CHRIST*, and Him crucified. Let this be the Motto for our Faith, this the Language of

* Acts xi. 23.

f our Souls; *CHRIST is All.* Then ſhall our irtues, though hitherto ſmitten with a Blaſt, re-ive as the Corn. Then ſhall our Hopes, though n themſelves weaker than the Ivy, mount like the Cedars.

Ther. You can hardly imagine, how a Senſe of Guilt and Unworthineſs oppreſſes my Mind. I am often diſcouraged, and cannot bring myſelf to be ſtedfaſt in Faith, or joyful through Hope.

Aſp. You cannot bring yourſelf, but GOD Almighty's Power, by the Grace of the Goſpel, can bring to paſs theſe deſirable Effects. And hear what the Prophet ſays farther, upon the charming Topic which introduced our Diſcourſe. Whenever the eloquent *Iſaiah* undertakes to diſplay a Truth, He gives it all the Energy, all the Beauty, and every heightening Touch, which it is capable of receiving.—This humble Shoot, ſpringing from the Stem of *Jeſſe*, ſhall riſe to ſuch a Pitch of Elevation; that it ſhall be conſpicuous far and near, and *ſtand for an Enſign of the People.* It ſhall be ſeen, not like a Beacon upon the Top of a Hill, by the *Iſraelites* only, or the Natives of a ſingle Territory; but like the great Luminaries of Heaven, ſhall be viſible in every Country, and by the whole inhabited World.—*To it ſhall the Gentiles ſeek*; not only from the remoteſt, but from the moſt barbarous and idolatrous Climes. Theſe, even theſe Perſons, though ſavage in their Nature, and deteſtable in their Manners, ſhall be freely admitted: Shall find Reſt and Refreſhment under his Shadow. Nay, the Refreſhment which He yields, and the Comfort which

which they receive, ſhall be not ſeaſonable only but of ſovereign Efficacy; *his Reſt ſhall be glorious** ſhall be attended with perfect Security; ſhall b productive of every Good; and iſſue in everlaſtin Joy.

From this we learn, that all the Bleſſings o *CHRIST*'s Mediation are deſigned for *Gentile*; for the moſt abandoned and moſt abominable Sinners.—That they are ſo full and conſummate, a to create a Calm of Tranquility, *a glorious Reſt*, even in the moſt troubled, afflicted, guilty Conſciences.—And I dare challenge my *Theron*'s miſgiving Mind, to ſpecify any Want which is not ſupplied, any Grievance which is not redreſſed, by the Righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*. I formerly encountered your *Objections*, let me now combat your *Scruples*.

Ther. Sometimes, I have a deep and diſtreſſing Conviction of my extreme Sinfulneſs.—'Tis like a ſore Burden, too heavy for me to bear.—'Tis like the vileſt Filth, and renders me odious to myſelf; how much more lotheſome to the all-ſeeing Eye!—It appears like a Debt of ten thouſand Talents, and I have nothing, no, not any thing to pay.—Then I experience, what the *Pſalmiſt* ſo pathetically laments; *My Sins have taken ſuch Hold upon me, that I am not able to look up: yea, they are more in Number than the Hairs of my Head*, and my Heart is ready to fail; my Hopes are upon the Point to expire.

* Iſai. xi. 10.

Miſt.

Aſp. Then, *Theron*, fly to that juſt and righteous ONE, who is the Strength of our Hearts; the Life of our Hopes; and our Portion for ever.

If Sin is a ſore *Burden*; look unto *CHRIST*, who bore it all, in his own Body on the Tree; and removed, entirely removed that tremendous Load, which would otherwiſe have ſunk the whole World into the nethermoſt Hell.—If Sin renders us *filthy*; let Us have recourſe to that Blood of Sprinkling, which cleanſes, not from a few Stains only, but from all Guilt. By which the moſt defiled Tranſgreſſors, become fair as the faireſt Wool; nay, whiter than the virgin Snows *.—If Sin is a *Debt* †; ſubjecting Us to Wrath, and binding Us over to Puniſhment; let Us confide in that gracious SURETY, who has taken the Debt upon Himſelf, and made it all his own. And not only ſo, but has paid it; paid it to the uttermoſt Farthing; to the very laſt Mite. So that Juſtice itſelf can demand no more.

Let

* Pſal. li. 7.

† By theſe three Images, the *Pſalmiſt* diſplays the horrible Nature, and deſtructive Malignity of Sin; together with the free Grant and invaluable Worth of the Forgiveneſs, which is in *CHRIST JESUS*. *Bleſſed is he whoſe Tranſgreſſion*, as an inſupportable Load, (נשוי) *is bore* or *taken away*; *whoſe Sin*, as being the moſt abominable Filth, (כסוי) *is covered*; *unto whom the LORD imputeth not* (לא יחשוב) that moſt ruinous of all Debts, *Iniquity*.—It is pleaſing and inſtructive to obſerve the Vehemence and the Ardour, with which the royal Penitent ſpeaks on this favourite Topic. He breaks out with a Kind of holy *Abruptneſs*, and pours his Soul in a *Variety* of the warmeſt Expreſſions. As one who thought, he could not poſſibly enter upon the Subject *too ſoon*, or dwell upon it *too long*. Pſal. xxxii. 1, 2.

Let me confirm and illuſtrate this comfortable Truth, by a ſcriptural Similitude. No Similitudes are more exact, and none ſo ſtriking. *I have* (not you, by your penitential Exerciſes; but I, by my free Grace have) *blotted out as a thick Cloud your Tranſgreſſions, and as a Cloud your Sins* *. A little while ago, the whole Expanſe of yonder Sky was covered with Clouds. Nothing could more ſtrongly repreſent, a Multitude of Corruptions beſieging the Heart, and a Multitude of Iniquities overſpreading the Life.—But where is, now, that immenſe Arrangement of gloomy Vapours? The Sun has ſhone them, and the Wind has ſwept them, clean away. There are none, neither great nor ſmall, remaining. From one End of the wide extended Hemiſphere to the other, we ſee nothing but the clear and beautiful Blue of the Firmament. *So*, ſaith the SPIRIT of GOD, to the Sinner that believes; *ſo totally* is your Guilt, however horrid and enormous, done away through the dying *JESUS*.

Ther. It is not poſſible to conceive, nor will the whole Creation afford, a more exquiſitely fine Compariſon. Nothing can ſo emphatically deſcribe the moſt prodigious Multitude, entirely obliterated, without the *leaſt Trace* of their former Exiſtence.—When a Stain is taken from our Garments, the Defilement is removed, but the fine native Gloſs never returns. When a Wound is healed in our Fleſh, the Gaſh is cloſed up, but ſome Blemiſh or Scar always remains. Whereas, when a Cloud is bruſhed away from the Sky, not only the tranſient Blot

* Iſai. xliv. 22.

Blot diſappears, but the delicate Expanſe, the "living Sapphire", is as gloſſy and brilliant as ever *. —But I am not only chargeable with *paſt* Iniquities; I am alſo liable to *daily* Miſcarriages. I relapſe into Sin; and when I would do Good, Evil is preſent with me.—Nay; my beſt Hours are not free from ſinful Infirmities, nor my beſt Duties from ſinful Imperfections. Which, like a Worm at the Core of the Fruit, eat away the Vigour, and tarniſh the Beauty of my Services.

Aſp. Becauſe through the Frailty of your mortal Nature, You cannot always ſtand upright; becauſe, even the *juſt Man falleth* daily, and daily contracteth Defilement; therefore *a Fountain is opened for Sin*

* There ſeems to be an Exactneſs and a Delicacy in the Prophet's Compariſon, which neither *Theron* nor *Aſpaſio* have obſerved. The Gradation I mean, the beautiful and comfortable Gradation, in the Senſe of thoſe Words, עב שחק. Which, I think, ſhould be tranſlated *Nubes, Nubecula*; as a *thick* Cloud, yea, as a *thin* Cloud.

Leſt Unbelief ſhould object to the firſt Clauſe; "A "Body of thick Clouds, diffuſed over the whole Sky, is "a ſullen and obſtinate Thing. It ſits deep; hangs heavy; and will not eaſily yield, either to the Sun, or to "the Wind." The LORD is pleaſed to anticipate and prevent the Objection, by adding; *I will blot out, as a* "thin *Cloud, thy Tranſgreſſions.* Be they ever ſo numerous, before my unbounded Grace, and the infinite "Merits of thy SAVIOUR's Death, they ſhall be as "the *Morning* Cloud (*Hoſ.* vi. 4.) which ſoon paſſeth "away; they ſhall be as the *detached* Cloud (*Gen.* ix. 14, "15. Heb. Bib.) which the gentleſt Gale diſlodges from "the Firmament."

See *Hoſ.* xiii. 3. where the Word שחק makes one, in a Group of the fineſt Images, that ever were exhibited to the Eye of the Mind. Fineſt and moſt pictureſque, to repreſent an *unſtable, tranſitory, vaniſhing* Condition.

Sin and for Uncleanneſs *. The Blood and Atonement of *CHRIST* are compared to a heavenly Fountain. In which polluted Sinners may waſh daily, waſh hourly; and be conſtantly, perfectly clean.—A *Ciſtern* may fail; may be broken or exhauſted. But it is the Property of a real Fountain, never to be dried up, always to yield its Waters. Such is the Efficacy of *CHRIST*'s Death! Not to be diminiſhed by univerſal and by inceſſant Uſe. It *removes the Iniquity of the Land* †. *It takes away the Sin of the World* ‡. It is new, for our Application, every Morning; new, for this bleſſed Purpoſe, every Moment. On which Account, it makes complete Proviſion for our Cleanſing, our Reſtoration, and our Comfort.—Aboliſhing our daily, hourly, momentary Miſcarriages, as thoroughly, as theſe Sun-beams overcome and diſſipate the Shades of Night.—Eſpecially, as this Blood is not only ſovereign in its Virtue, and always free for our Approach, but is ever pleaded by a great HIGH-PRIEST in our Behalf. Therefore, the inſpired Caſuiſt directs Us to *this* Source of Conſolation, under all the Upbraidings of Conſcience, and amidſt all the Remains of inbred Depravity. *If any Man ſin, We have an Advocate with the FATHER, JESUS CHRIST the Righteous, and He is the Propitiation for our Sins* §.

We; St. *John* reckons Himſelf in the Number of thoſe frail offending Creatures, who ſtand in need of *CHRIST*, as a perpetual Interceſſor. This is written, not to encourage Us in the Commiſſion of

* Zech. xiii. 1. † Zech. iii. 9. ‡ John i. 29. § 1 John ii. 1.

of Sin; but that We may be the leſs diſcouraged, under a Senſe of our Infirmities.—We *have*; not We poſſibly may, but We actually have. A Soul burdened with Guilt, cannot be ſatisfied, cannot be eaſed, with a bare *Perhaps*. It is therefore poſitively affirmed; as a Matter of eſtabliſhed Certainty; of which We ſhould not admit a Doubt.—We have for our Advocate, not a *mean* Perſon, but HIM who received an illuſtrious Teſtimony from the moſt excellent Glory, *This is my beloved SON* *—Not a *guilty* Perſon, who ſtands in need of Pardon for Himſelf, but *JESUS CHRIST*, *the* divinely, the ſupremely, the only *righteous* One.—Not a mere Petitioner, who relies upon Liberality or Mercy; but who has *merited*, fully merited whatever He aſks, in Behalf of his Clients. Being *the Propitiation for our Sins*; having paid our Ranſom, and purchaſed our Peace—In conſequence of which, He *claims* rather than aſks our renewed, our irrevocable Forgiveneſs—This He claims, not from an unrelenting Judge, but from his FATHER and our FATHER—And can *ſuch* a Plea meet with a Repulſe? Can *ſuch* an Advocate miſcarry in his Suit?—If the Prophets of old were reckoned, *The Chariot of Iſrael, and the Horſemen thereof* †; becauſe,

* 2 Pet. i. 17.

† 2 *Kings* ii. 12. xiii. 14. There is a peculiar Beauty, and moſt appoſite Significancy, in this *proverbial* Saying, as uſed by the antient *Iſraelites*. *Horſes* and *Chariots* were deemed, in thoſe Ages, the principal Strength of the Battle, the moſt formidable Apparatus of War. Of theſe the *Iſraelites* were entirely deſtitute. Their GOD had expreſly forbidden them to multiply Horſes; and We never read of their bringing any conſiderable Num-

cauſe, like their Anceſtor *Jacob*, they had Power with GOD, and prevailed in Prayer: O! what a Defence, what a Security, is the ſublimely excellent, and ever-prevailing Interceſſion of *JESUS CHRIST!*

"Your Services, You complain, are tarniſhed "and defective."—Then, my dear Friend, renounce them in Point of Confidence; and gladly receive, cordially embrace, the all-perfect Righteouſneſs of your LORD.—*The Law makes nothing perfect.* Your own Conformity to its Precepts, can never fit You for Heaven, never give You Peace of Conſcience. Hither if We look for any of theſe deſirable Bleſſings; We are like thoſe Travellers, who look for the Fruits of *Eden* in the Deſarts of *Arabia.* But our *LORD JESUS CHRIST, by one Oblation, has perfected for ever, them that are ſanctified.*

By the *Oblation* of Himſelf; which was grand, inconceivably great, and of infinite Efficacy; being ennobled by all the Glories of the GODHEAD.—On which Account, it needed no Repetition; it was incapable of any Augmentation; it is all-ſufficient, though but *One.*—By this immenſely efficacious Sacrifice He *hath perfected.* What are We to underſtand by this Expreſſion? The Epiſtle to the *Coloſſians* informs Us. He hath rendered them *unblameable and unreproveable in his Sight.* To be free from Blame; without any Cauſe of juſt Reproof; chargeable

ber of Cavalry into the Field.—But, ſo long as they enjoyed the Preſence of their Prophets, they wanted not this Arm of Fleſh. They had more than an Equivalent for Squadrons of Horſe, and Chariots of Iron, in the *fervent*, the *effectual* Prayers of thoſe holy Men of GOD.

ſible with no Failure; Is not this a State of Perfection?—And this, not merely before a human or angelic Scrutiny, but *in his Sight*; before that all-penetrating Eye, which ſearcheth the Hearts; before that moſt pure Eye, which cannot behold Iniquity.—This Perfection, effected by our REDEEMER's Satisfaction, is not barely for a Day, or a Seaſon; it knows no Intermiſſion; it continues *for ever*. Not like the green Hue, which vernal Suns have imparted to theſe Herbs and Plants; but like the blue Luſtre, which the Almighty Fiat gave to yonder Expanſe of the Skies.

Ther. What meaneth the following Expreſſion? Methinks, that damps my Hopes. If I ſhould not be in the Number of the Sanctified, this Text ſpeaks no Comfort to me.

Aſp. Thoſe that are ſanctified, ſays an eminent Critic, ſignify thoſe who are endued with the evangelical Sanctification *. Which conſiſts in the Holineſs, the Obedience, the Death of *CHRIST*, imputed to them, and received by Faith. Whereby, they are cleanſed from all their Filthineſs, and conſtituted righteous in the Preſence of GOD.—It is pretty evident, that the Apoſtle cannot intend the Righteouſneſs of Works, or inherent Holineſs; becauſe, that is always imperfect. Of that, *David* cries out, in the Language of Deſpondency. *Enter not into Judgement with thy Servant.* And aſſigns this Reaſon for his Requeſt; *In thy Sight*, and in this Reſpect, *no Man living ſhall be juſtified*, or found perfect. No; nothing can claim that Character before HIM who dwelleth in Light inacceſſible, but only the Work, the Sufferings, the Righteouſ-

* See STOCKIUS on the Word αγιαζω.

neſs of *CHRIST*. Theſe therefore, and theſe only, can *make the Comers thereunto perfect*.

I have ſomewhere ſeen, painted upon a flat Surface, an aukward and diſagreeable Countenance. Nothing was regular; nothing graceful; but every Feature diſproportionate. Yet this very Face, reflected from a cylindrical Mirror, has put off its Deformity; the Lineaments were reformed and well adjuſted; Symmetry connected every Part, and Beauty ſmiled throughout the Whole.—Like the *former* our Virtues appear, when compared with the immaculate Purity of GOD, or the ſublime Perfection of his Law. But they acquire the Amableneſs of the *latter*, when preſented to the FATHER by our divine MEDIATOR; when recommended by his moſt precious Oblation; and *accepted in the BELOVED* *.

Milton, taking his Hint from the Revelation of St. *John*, repreſents our great HIGH-PRIEST, in this glorious and delightful Attitude. Repreſents Him, offering up the Supplications and penitential Duties

* *They*, the Perſons and Performances of frail Men, *ſhall come up with Acceptance on mine Altar, ſaith the LORD.* Iſai. lx. 7.—Which is explained by St. *Peter's* Comment; *Ye are an holy Prieſthood, to offer up ſpiritual Sacrifices, acceptable unto GOD by JESUS CHRIST*, 1 Pet. ii. 5. And ſtill farther aſcertained by St. *Paul's* Practice. Who, when He addreſſes the MAJESTY of Heaven with any Petition, or preſents the Tribute of Praiſe, preſumes not to do either the one or the other, but on the appointed Altar, or in the bleſſed MEDIATOR's Name. Becauſe, ſecluded from this grand Recommendation, they would be *offenſive* to the awful JEHOVAH, "as Smoke in his Noſtrils;" accompanied with it, they are *acceptable*, "as the ſweet ſmelling Incenſe."

Duties of our firſt Parents; purifying and perfuming them with the Incenſe of his own Merits; and thus interceding before the Throne.

See, FATHER! what firſt Fruits on Earth are ſprung
From thy implanted Grace in Man! Theſe Sighs
And Prayers, which in this golden Cenſer mix'd
With Incenſe, I thy PRIEST before Thee bring.
— — Now therefore bend thine Ear
To Supplication; hear his Sighs though mute!
Unſkilful with what Words to pray, let ME
Interpret for Him; ME his Advocate
And Propitiation. All his Works on ME,
Good, or not good, ingraft: MY Merit thoſe
Shall perfect; and for theſe MY Death ſhall pay *.

The Poet's Words are very *emphatical*. Yet Words can no more expreſs the *Prevalence* of our LORD's Negotiation, than the Picture of the Sun can diffuſe its Splendor, or convey its Warmth. —Though *our* poor Performances are rendered acceptable by this prevailing Interceſſor; let Us never forget, that *His* Works, ſupremely righteous and incomparably excellent, are the Cauſe of our Salvation. By *his* Works, I am juſtified: by *his* Works, I am ſaved. *They* are my Plea; and can there be a more ſubſtantial one? *They* are my Boaſt; and can there be a more rational one?

Ther. When I look on myſelf, and my religious Obligations, I find, that my ſpiritual Wants are many. I have many Duties to diſcharge, and

* MILTON. Book XI. l. 22, &c.

many Temptations to withſtand. I have many Corruptions to mortify, and many Graces to cultivate. Yet have I no Stock, and no Strength of my own.

Aſp. I rejoice, that my *Theron* is ſenſible of his own Indigence. The good LORD keep Us both, in this Reſpect as little Children; whoſe whole Dependence is upon their Nurſe's Care, or their Parent's Bounty! Then may we, having ſuch a Senſe of our Poverty, and having a great HIGH-PRIEST over the Houſe of GOD, come boldly to the Throne of Grace. We may apply, through the Righteouſneſs of *JESUS CHRIST*, for all needful Succour, and for every deſirable Bleſſing.—If *Solomon* could ſay; *LORD, remember David, and all his Trouble.* If *Moſes* could ſay; *LORD, remember Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob thy Servants.* How much more confidently may *we* ſay; "LORD, remember *JESUS*, the Son of thy "Love! Remember *JESUS*, and all his Suffer-"ings; *JESUS* and all his Merits. Shall *they* "be ſent empty away, who have their SAVIOUR's "Obedience and Death to plead?"—No verily. Though they are altogether unworthy in themſelves, yet worthy is the LAMB that was ſlain, for whoſe Sake their Petitions ſhould be granted, and their every Neceſſity ſupplied.

Let me repeat to you a moſt beautiful and encouraging Portion of Scripture. Which you may look upon, under all your Wants, as *Charte Blanche* put into your Hand by GOD all-ſufficient. It gives You full Liberty, to aſk what You need; and good Ground, to expect what You aſk. *Having therefore, Brethren, Boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt*

Holieſt by the Blood of JESUS; by a new and living Way which he has conſecrated for Us, brough the Veil, that is to ſay, his Fleſh; And having an HIGH-PRIEST over the Houſe of GOD; let us draw near with a true Heart, in full Aſſurance of Faith *.

The Apoſtle, in this Place, and throughout this whole Epiſtle, alludes to the *Moſaic* Ordinances; in order to ſhew, that the Privileges of the *Chriſtian* Diſpenſation, were typefied by, yet are greatly ſuperior to, thoſe of the *Jewiſh*.—Among the *Jews*, none but the *High-Prieſt*, was permitted to ſet a Foot within the Holy of Holies; and He, only on the ſolemn Day of Expiation. Whereas, *all Chriſtians* are allowed to enter into the immediate Preſence of the moſt High GOD; may have the neareſt Acceſs to HIM, who dwells in the Heaven of Heavens; and this, not once in the Year only, but at all Times, and on all Occaſions.—The High-Prieſt never made that awful Approach, but with the Blood of a *ſlaughtered* Animal. We have Blood of infinitely richer Value, to atone for our Failings, and recommend our Addreſſes; even the Blood of the *crucified JESUS*.—*Aaron* entered through the Veil of the Temple; a Way, which was ſoon to become antiquated, and for ever to be aboliſhed. *We* enter by a far more noble Way; by the Fleſh of our bleſſed REDEEMER; given as a propitiatory Sacrifice for our Sins. Which Way is both *new* and *living*; ſuch as never waxes old, will ſubſiſt to the End of Time, and leads to eternal Life.—Truſting in this Sacrifice, and entering by this Way, which are conſecrated on Purpoſe for our Uſe, We may not only draw

* Heb. x. 19, 20, 21, 22.

near, but draw near *with Boldneſs*, with an humble filial Confidence; and preſent our Supplications with *Aſſurance* of Faith—with *full* Aſſurance of Faith.

How ſtrong is the Contraſt, and how fine the Gradation! How precious the Doctrine, and how free the Privilege! What ſhall we fear, if we believe this Doctrine? What can we lack, if we improve this Privilege?—And why ſhould We not believe the former, why ſhould We not improve the latter? Since they both are founded, not on any excellent Endowments, not on any recommending Actions of our own, but *purely*, *ſolely*, *entirely* on the Blood of *JESUS CHRIST*.

Ther. There may come Seaſons of *Deſertion*, when all Graces are languid, if not dead: When the Light of GOD's Countenance is ſuſpended, if not turned into Darkneſs: and the Man is more like a lifeleſs Log, than a zealous *Chriſtian*. Theſe Frames of Mind I have heard mentioned, and I begin to know ſomething of them by Experience.

Aſp. Then *Theron*, when you *walk in Darkneſs, and ſee no Light* of ſenſible Comfort, *truſt in the Name*, the unchangeable Grace, *of the LORD; and ſtay upon* the Righteouſneſs, the conſummate Righteouſneſs, of *your GOD* *. This, you ſee, is not barely my Advice, but the Direction of an infallible Guide.—This agrees alſo with the Character of a real *Chriſtian*, as it is moſt exactly drawn by an unerring Pen. *We rejoice in CHRIST JESUS, and have no Confidence in the Fleſh* †; no Reliance

* Iſai. l. 10.

† *Phil.* iii. 3. *Exactly drawn*—Perhaps, there is no where extant a finer, a more complete, or ſo lively a Picture

Reliance on any Thing of our own, either for present Joy, or future Glory. What *CHRIST* has done, is that which pleaſes GOD. What *CHRIST* has done, is that which quiets our Conſciences, and chears our Hearts. It is the glorious Robe of HIS Righteouſneſs, which covers our Sins, and adorns our Perſons; which renders Us completely and eternally righteous before GOD himſelf; and gives Us a ſure, an unalienable Title to the Bleſſedneſs of Heaven.

To rely on the Elevation of our Spirits, or the Enlargement of our Devotion, is like building our Houſe upon the *Ice*. Which may abide for a Seaſon; but, upon the firſt Alteration of Weather, ceaſes to be a Foundation, and becomes *Water that runneth apace*. Whereas, to derive our Conſolation from the MEDIATOR's Righteouſneſs, and JEHOVAH's Faithfulneſs, is to build our Edifice upon the *Rock*: which *may not be removed, but ſtandeth faſt for ever*. The former of theſe, even amidſt all our Changes, is invariably the ſame. The latter, notwithſtanding all our Unworthineſs, is inviolably ſure. Therefore, the *Fruit* of that Righteouſ-

Picture of the true Chriſtian. 'Tis in *Miniature*, I own: but it comprehends all the *maſter* Lines, and every *diſtinguiſhing* Feature. *We are they, who worſhip GOD in the Spirit*; with the ſpiritual Homage of a renewed Heart; with Faith, Love, Reſignation. *And rejoice in CHRIST JESUS*; in Him look for all our Acceptance with GOD; from Him derive all the Peace of our Minds; and on Him place all the Hope of our final Felicity. *And have no Confidence in the Fleſh*; or any Thing whatever, that ſeemed excellent in Man. Renouncing ourſelves, in every View, as unprofitable Servants; diſclaiming all our own Works and Attainments, as defective Services.

Righteouſneſs is Peace, and the *Effect* of this Faithfulneſs is, if not rapturous Joy, yet *Quietneſs and Aſſurance for ever* *.

So that when it is Winter in my Soul, and there lies a Dearth on all my ſenſible Delights, I would ſtill ſay with the Pſalmiſt; "*Why art thou ſo diſ-*" *quieted, O my Soul?* *CHRIST* is the ſame a-" midſt all thy Derelictions. *He is a green Fir-*" *Tree* †, which never loſes its Verdure. Under" his Shadow Thou may'ſt always find Repoſe.

" We have Peace with GOD, not becauſe" We feel this or that holy Emotion in our Breaſts:" not becauſe We are conſcious of any Differ-" ence, between Ourſelves and the moſt flagitious" of Mankind. But becauſe *JESUS* is the" *CHRIST*, and has fulfilled all Righteouſneſs" in our Stead.—We may not always be fervent" in Spirit. We may not always be free from" vile Affections. But his Merit and Atonement" are always mighty to ſave. They conſtitute an" everlaſting and infinite Baſis for our Juſtifica-" tion. The Promiſes of GOD, through his" Mediation, *are yea, and amen* ‡; are unqueſti-" onably

* Iſai. xxxii. 17. † Hoſ. xiv. 8.

‡ 2 *Cor.* i. 20. *Yea and Amen—Yea*; that is, *our own.* When a poor Man preſents a Petition, and his rich Friend anſwers, *Yea*; the Favour is granted; the Gift becomes his own.—*Amen*; *ſure* to be performed. The Word ſignifies *Truth* or *Faithfulneſs*. Implying, that the Promiſes are as certain, as Truth can make them; as much to be depended on, as Faithfulneſs itſelf.—All this *in CHRIST JESUS*. Not by Virtue of any good Works, or on Condition of any Worthineſs in Us, but wholly on Account of *CHRIST JESUS*—of his ineſtimable Blood, and everlaſting Righteouſneſs.

"onably and irrevocably ours;" are, amidſt all "Circumſtances, and under the deepeſt Deſer-"tion, ours."

Ther. 'Tis very probable, I may meet with *Afflictions*; Death in my Family, or Diſeaſe in my Perſon. Diſappointments may fruſtrate my Deſigns. Providence may wear a frowning Aſpect; as though the LORD had a Controverſy with his ſinful Creature, and was cauſing Him to poſſeſs the Iniquities of his Youth. And what will be ſufficient to ſupport and to chear, in ſuch a gloomy Hour *?

Aſp. The Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*.—An Ambaſſador from the *Spaniſh* Court was once extolling, at a prodigious Rate, the Magnificence and Glory of his Sovereign. He ſet about proving his Superiority to all other Monarchs, by running over a long Catalogue of Countries, Provinces, and States ſubject to his Dominion. An Envoy from the *French* King being preſent, replied to each of theſe petty Titles, *France! France!* never varying his Anſwer, but ſtill repeating the Word *France*. Thereby repreſenting this one Monarchy, as more than equivalent to all thoſe inconſiderable Principalities.—With unſpeakably greater Propriety may I conſtantly reiterate, *The Righteouſneſs! The Righteouſneſs! The incomprehenſibly glorious Righteouſneſs*

* The Sufficiency of *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs, to anſwer all theſe important and delightful Ends, is excellently diſplayed in Mr. RAWLIN's Sermons, entitled *CHRIST the Righteouſneſs of his People*. In which the Public have ſeen the grand and amiable Eſſentials of the Goſpel, delivered in maſculine Language; defended by nervous Reaſoning; and animated with a lively Devotion.

neſs of JESUS CHRIST! as a moſt ſatisfactory Anſwer to all Complaints; as a moſt ſolid Support under all Troubles; and as more than equal to all our Wants.

Nothing is ſo ſovereign, to calm our Fears, and remove all Apprehenſions of the divine Wrath. Apprehenſions of the divine Wrath, would draw the Curtains of Horror around our ſick Beds, and throw upon our languiſhing Eye-lids the Shadow of Death *. But a believing Improvement of the imputed Righteouſneſs *clears up* the mournful Scene, and *takes away* the Sting of Tribulation.

Attending to this great Propitiation, the Sufferer ſees his Sins forgiven, and his GOD reconciled. From whence he concludes, that the ſevereſt Afflictions are only fatherly Corrections; ſhall not exceed his Ability to bear; and ſhall aſſuredly obtain a gracious Iſſue. He can fetch Comfort from that chearing Word, *I will be with him in Trouble:* And expect the Accompliſhment of that moſt conſolatory Promiſe, *I will deliver Him, and bring him to Honour* †.—Theſe Supports have enabled the Saints, to kiſs the Rod, and bleſs the Hand, *which* chaſtiſed them. To poſſeſs their Souls, not in Patience only, but in Thankfulneſs alſo. While *they* have *looked inward*, and diſcerned their abſolute Need of theſe bitter but ſalutary Medicines: *Have looked upward*, and beheld the Cup in a moſt wiſe *and*

* Alluding to that Deſcription of Tribulation and Anguiſh, which, I believe, no Perſon of Senſibility can read without ſhuddering; *My Face is foul with Weeping, and on my Eye-lids is the Shadow of Death.* Job xvi. 16.

† Pſal. xci. 15.

and tender PHYSICIAN's Hand: Have *looked forward*, with a joyful Hope, to that better World; where GOD will wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and there ſhall be no more Sorrow, nor any more Pain.

Ther. The laſt Occaſion of Need is the trying Hour of *Death*, and the tremendous Day of *Judgment*. Will this Righteouſneſs carry Us, with Safety, through the darkſome Valley; and preſent Us, with Acceptance, at the dreadful Tribunal?

Aſp. It will: It will.—This ſilences all the Curſes of the Law, and diſarms Death of every Terror. To believe in this Righteouſneſs, is to meet Death at our SAVIOUR's Side; or rather, like good old *Simeon*, with the SAVIOUR in our Arms.—*They overcame*, ſays the beloved Diſciple; they overcame the laſt Enemy, not by natural Fortitude, or philoſophic Reſolution, but *by the Blood of the* LAMB*. By that grand Price of Redemption, which coſt the REDEEMER every Drop of his Blood; which delivers Sinners from the Wrath to come, and entitles them to the incorruptible Inheritance.

I know, adds the heroic Apoſtle, *whom I have believed*†; I am aſſured, that my JESUS is infinitely faithful, and will not deſert me; that his Ranſom is abſolutely ſufficient, and cannot deceive me. Therefore, with a holy Bravery, He bids Defiance to Death; or rather, triumphs over it, as a vanquiſhed Enemy; *Thanks be to GOD who giveth Us the Victory through our LORD JESUS CHRIST*‡!—Nay, through the victorious Efficacy

* Rev. xii. 11. † 2 Tim. i. 12. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 57.

cacy of *CHRIST*'s Propitiation, *Death is ours**; not our Foe, but our Friend and Deliverer. We may number it among our Treaſures; and reſt ſatisfied, That *to die, is Gain.*

What? Though our Fleſh ſee Corruption. Though this Body, vile at preſent, be made viler ſtill, by dwelling amidſt Worms, and mouldering in the Duſt; yet through HIS Righteouſneſs, who is the Reſurrection and the Life, it ſhall ſhake off the Diſhonours of the Grave: It ſhall riſe to a new and illuſtrious State of Exiſtence: It ſhall be made like the *glorious* and *immortal* Body of our triumphant LORD.—If the Body be ſo refined, ſo exalted; what will be the Dignity, what the Perfection, of the Soul! Or rather, of Soul and Body both, when they are happily and indiſſolubly united, at the Reſurrection of the Juſt?—Shall they have any thing to fear, when the Judgment is ſet, and the Books are opened? 'Tis probable there will be no Accuſation, 'tis certain *there is no Condemnation, to them that are in CHRIST JESUS*†. Who ſhall lay any Thing to their Charge? *It is GOD* —not Man, or Angel, or any Creature, but GOD —*that juſtifies* them. The GOD whoſe Law was broke, the GOD to whom Vengeance belongeth, He Himſelf pronounces them *innocent*, becauſe their Iniquities have been laid upon *CHRIST*; He Himſelf pronounces them *righteous*, becauſe they are intereſted in the Obedience of their REDEEMER; on theſe Accounts, He Himſelf pronounces them *bleſſed*, and gives them an *abundant Entrance* into the Joy of their LORD.

But

* 1 Cor. iii. 22. † Rom. viii. 1.

But what can expreſs, or who can imagine their Happineſs, when they take up their Abode, in the Palaces of Heaven; amidſt the Choirs of Angels; and under the Light of GOD's Countenance! When they poſſeſs *the Hope of Righteouſneſs* *; when they wear *the Crown of Righteouſneſs* †; and receive that great, that eternal Salvation, which is an adequate Recompence for the Humiliation and Agonies of *JESUS CHRIST the righteous* ‡.

Come then, my dear *Theron*, let Us henceforth be as Branches, ingrafted into the heavenly VINE; derive all our Sap, all our Moiſture, all our Conſolation, from his Fulneſs. Let Us live upon our all-ſufficient REDEEMER, as the *Iſraelites* ſubſiſted on their Manna from Heaven, and their Waters from the Rock; and not wiſh for *other*, as we cannot poſſibly enjoy *better* Suſtenance.

Ther. Is this the Meaning of our LORD's Exhortation, when he ſhews the Neceſſity of *eating his Fleſh*, and *drinking his Blood?*

Aſp. 'Tis the very ſame. A repeated and inceſſant Application of our SAVIOUR's Merits, for all the Purpoſes of Piety and Salvation, is the Kernel of this Nut, the Meaning of this Metaphor.—*When* we habitually advert to *JESUS CHRIST*, as dying for our Sins, and riſing again for our Juſtification; performing all Righteouſneſs, that we may be intitled to an eternal Crown; and interceding in Heaven, that we may be filled with all the Fulneſs of GOD: *Then* we eat his Fleſh, and drink his Blood.—When We habitually advert to *JESUS CHRIST*,

* Gal. v. 5. † 2 Tim. iv. 8. ‡ 1 John ii. 1.

CHRIST, as entirely aboliſhing all our Guilt; making Us whiter than Snow, by his moſt precious Blood; and, through his tranſcendently noble Obedience, preſenting Us unblameable before GOD. *Then* we derive a Life of ſolid Comfort, and real Godlineſs, from his mediatorial Offices; juſt as we derive the Continuance of our natural Life, from the daily Uſe of alimentary Recruits.

Ther. Your Diſcourſe brings to my Remembrance that magnificent and beautiful Paſſage in Scripture, where *CHRIST* is called THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. Your Doctrine ſets the Compariſon in a very advantageous Light; gives it the utmoſt Force, and the greateſt Propriety.—The Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, according to your Account, is as extenſively uſeful in the *Chriſtian* Life, as the Beams of that grand Luminary are in the material World.—The Sun fills the *Air*; where it ſheds the Light, and pours the Day.—The Sun penetrates the *Ocean*; from whence it exhales Vapours, and forms the Clouds.—In the *vegetable* Creation, the Sun raiſes the Sap, and protrudes the Gems; unfolds the Leaves, and paints the Bloſſom; diſtends the Fruit, and concocts the Juices.—Turn we to the *animal* World; the Sun lends Sight to every Eye, and awakens Myriads of Inſects into Being. It diffuſes thoſe reviving Rays, in which all Nature baſks and diſpenſes that general Smile, in which every ſenſible Creature exults. Indeed, its benign Agency is univerſal. *There is nothing hid from the Heat thereof.*

Aſp. Thus the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, that true and only *Sun of Righteouſneſs*, *ariſes* on his People

People *with Healing in his Wings* *. So various, ſo efficacious, and ſo extenſive are his Influences. Like a *Sun*, He enlightens and enlivens: like *Wings*, He cheriſhes and protects: like a Remedy, He *heals* and reſtores. And all, by virtue of his Righteouſneſs, on account of his *Righteouſneſs*.—Nor can We doubt, nor need We wonder, if We conſider its Nature and its Author. Its *Nature*; it is ſupremely excellent, has every Kind, and every Degree of Perfection. Its *Author*; it is the Righteouſneſs and Obedience of that ſublime PERSON, in whom *dwells all the Fulneſs of the* GODHEAD.

It muſt therefore—You will permit me to ſum up in a Word, what has been diſplayed at large—It muſt be fully anſwerable to the *Demands* of the *Law*, even in its higheſt Purity, and utmoſt Exactneſs.—It is infinitely ſuperior to the *Demerit* of *Sin*, and entirely abſolves from all Guilt, entirely exempts from all Condemnation.—It is a moſt valid and never-failing Plea, againſt the *Accuſations* of *Satan*, and the Challenges of Conſcience.—It eſtabliſhes an undoubted *Title* to *every* Bleſſing, whether in Time or in Eternity, whether of Grace or of Glory.—It is a ſure Support for the Chriſtian, in an Hour of *Deſertion*, and in the Agonies of *Death*. Caſting Anchor on this Bottom, He may diſmiſs every Fear, and ride out every Storm. Leaning upon this Staff, He may go down to the Repoſe of the Grave; and neither be appalled at the ſolemn Harbingers of Diſſolution, nor terrified at its far more awful Conſequences.—The Merit of this Righteouſneſs, and the Power of its DIVINE AUTHOR, will unſeal the Tomb; will bring forth the ſleeping Duſt

* Mal. iv. 2.

from the Chambers of Putrefaction; and build up the whole Man into Immortality and Glory. By this He will be preſented *without Spot* *; preſented *faultleſs* †; yea, be preſented *perfect* ‡, and with *exceeding Joy*, before the Throne.

What a Gift then is the *Righteouſneſs of CHRIST!*—"O my Soul, what wouldſt thou wiſh, for thy "Conſolation and Joy? What wouldſt thou wiſh, "to be the Stability of thy Hope, and the Strength "of thy Salvation?—Wouldſt thou have that, "which is greater than the whole World, and all "its Grandeur, and all its Treaſure? Thou haſt "it in *CHRIST*.—Wouldſt thou have that, which "is greater than the Heaven of Heavens, and all "its ſtarry Hoſts, and all its angelic Inhabitants? "Thou haſt it in *CHRIST*.—Wouldſt thou "have that, which is abundantly greater, incom-"parably greater, immenſely greater than all? "Thou haſt it in *CHRIST*.—Wouldſt thou have "that, which is great as the inexorable Juſtice of "GOD can demand; great as the unſearchable "Wiſdom of GOD can deviſe? Thou haſt it in "*CHRIST*.—Wouldſt thou have that, which "is great, and excellent, and glorious, as the Per-"fections of the almighty and eternal GOD? "Thou haſt it in the Holineſs, the Righteouſneſs, "and the Blood of *CHRIST*—in the immacu-"late Holineſs of his Nature—in the conſummate "Righteouſneſs of his Life—and the infinitely "precious Blood of his Croſs.—Surely, then, Thou "haſt to ſay, with the holy Apoſtle; Bleſſed be "*GOD* for this UNSPEAKABLE GIFT."

A

* Eph. v. 27. † Jude 24. ‡ Col. i. 28.

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